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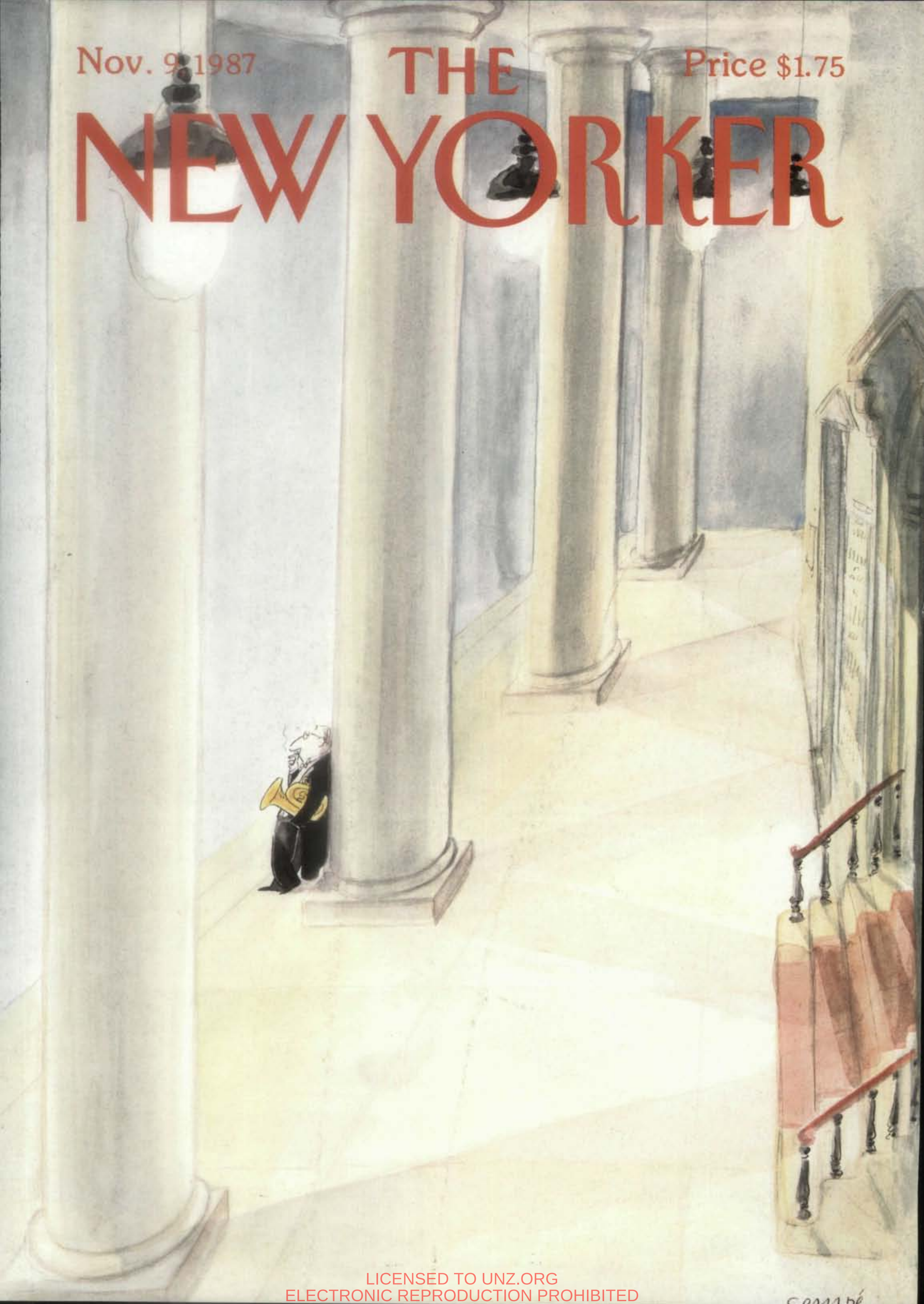

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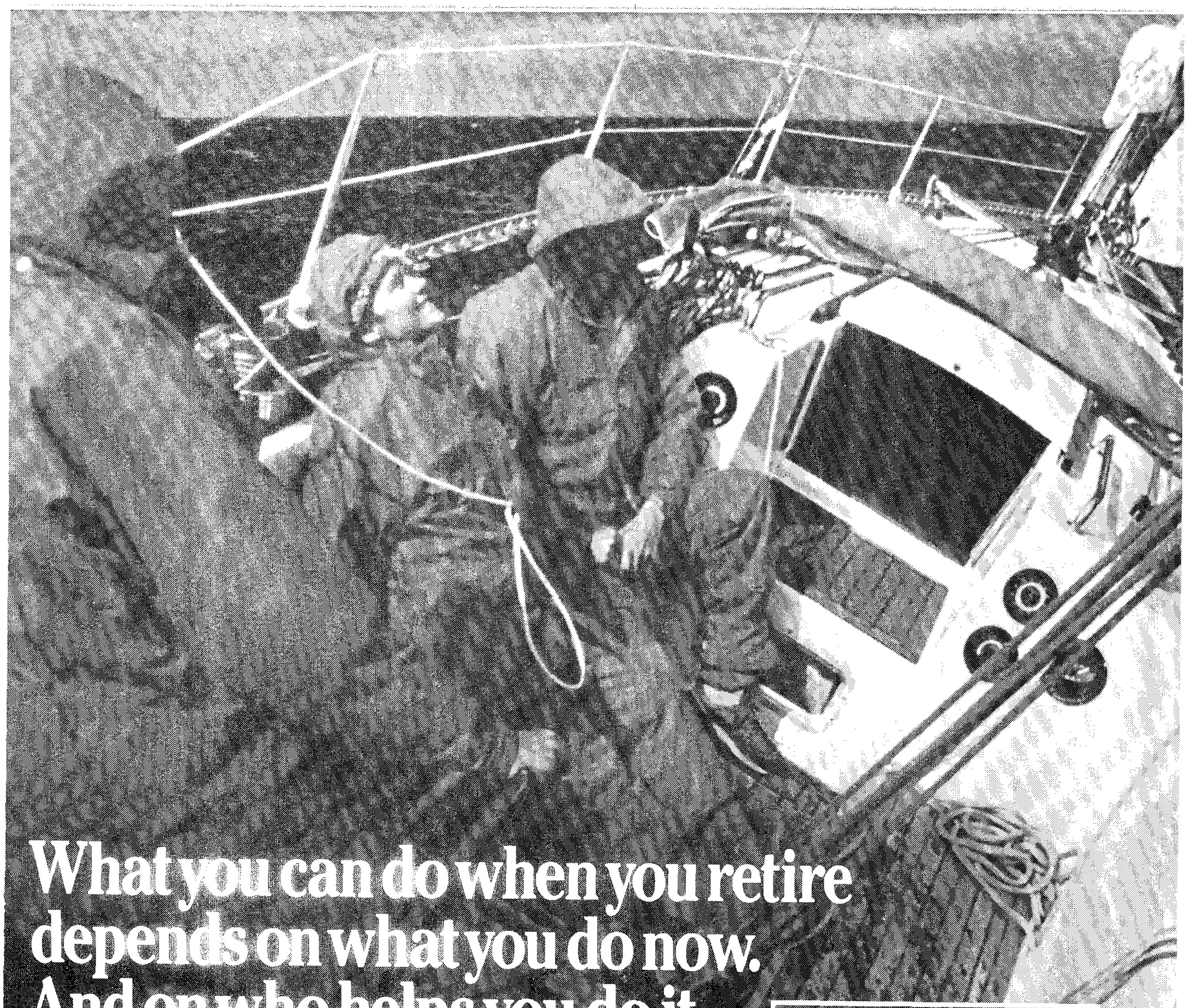
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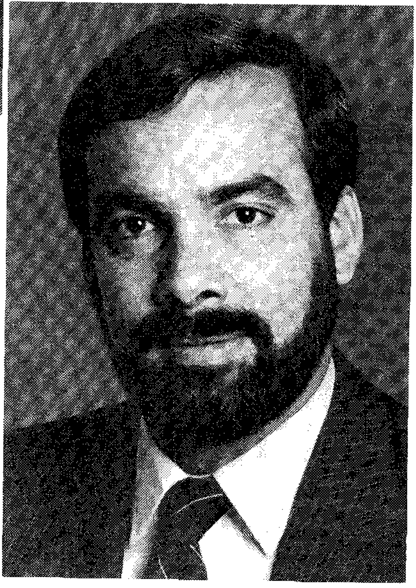

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

A CONSCIENTIOUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST

THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

Anything Goes—Under the clever, gifted direction of Jerry Zaks, this exuberant, satisfying revival is primarily a celebration of Cole Porter himself. The libretto, as revised from the original by Timothy Crouse and John Weidman, is consistently entertaining. The company, which includes Bill McCutcheon, Howard McGillin, Patti LuPone, Anthony Heald, and Kathleen Mahony-Bennett, does more than justice to the words and score. The elegant settings and costumes were designed by Tony Walton and lighted by Paul Gallo; the witty choreography was by Michael Smuin and the witty orchestral arrangements by Michael Gibson. (Reviewed in our issue of 11/2/87.) (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Birds of Paradise—A warm, sweet, funny musical by Winnie Holzman and David Evans (she's words, he's music, they both wrote the book) about an amateur theatre group rehearsing a musical adaptation of Chekhov's "The Seagull." The show is dominated by the same spirit of zany, unpretentious innocence that made "The Foreigner" such a joy (it's produced by the same person, John A. McQuiggan). It sends you out on a high, humming the tunes and looking forward to the cast album. The superb cast, led by Todd Graff, John Cunningham, and Mary Beth Peil, is faultlessly directed by Arthur Laurents. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Burn This—Lanford Wilson's play can be considered an occasion for an astonishing performance by John Malkovich, as a foulmouthed restaurant manager who woos and wins his dead brother's dancing partner. The supporting actors—Joan Allen, Jonathan Hogan, and Lou Liberatore—are very good. Marshall W. Mason was the able director, and the distinguished setting was designed by John Lee Beatty and lighted by Dennis Parichy. (10/26/87) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Cabaret—This tasteful revival of the 1966 musical by John Kander and Fred Ebb has three things going for it. The first is a sterling performance by Alyson Reed, who plays Sally Bowles as she was always meant to be played and then some; the second is a gloriously muted and subtle Joel Grey re-creating his role as the Emcee; the third is a slightly rewritten book by Joe Masteroff, the original librettist, which, while not entirely successful, suggests that what's caught so many imaginations in the story of Sally Bowles has something to do with relations between heterosexual women and bisexual men. (11/2/87) (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Circle Repertory Company—Rafael Lima's play **el salvador,** about a group of television journalists in that embattled country, is short on substance, but his characters are credible, and the lines they speak sound authentic, and are often funny. John Bishop directed the capable actors. (10/26/87) (99 Seventh Ave. S. 924-7100. Wednesday through Friday at 8; Saturday at 7 and 10; and Sunday at 7:30. Matinée Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, Nov. 8.)

Circumstances—A one-man show written and performed by Louis Mustillo. (Susan Bloch, 307 W. 26th St. 691-7641. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

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Don't Get God Started—A gospel musical that is all but done in by amplification. The music and lyrics were by Marvin Winans, and Ron Milner wrote the brief, parable-like playlets between the songs. Mr. Milner directed. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Longacre, 220 W. 48th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

Dreamgirls—A revival of Michael Bennett's 1981 musical. Tom Eyen wrote the book and lyrics, and Henry Krieger wrote the music. (Ambassador, 215 W. 49th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Driving Miss Daisy—Alfred Uhry's play is more a sentimental than a dramatic occasion, which tells, in a series of brief scenes, of the growing attachment of a cranky old woman in Atlanta to her black chauffeur. What gives the evening distinction is the performance—the fine acting of Dana Ivey and Morgan Freeman, under Ron Lagomarsino's direction. (4/27/87) (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Satu days at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Equity Library Theatre—The second in this season's series of eight productions is a revival the 1953 musical **kismet.** Score and lyrics b Robert Wright and George Forrest; book b Charles Lederer and Luther Davis, who hav revised it for this production. (Equit Library Theatre, 103rd St. and Riverside D. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Sa urdays and Sundays at 2:30. Closes Sunda Nov. 22. For information about tickets, f which contributions are requested, call 66 2028.)

Fences—August Wilson's play about a blac garbageman, formerly a baseball player professional calibre, is as powerful as, an even richer than, his "Ma Rainey's Blac Bottom." The triumphant performance, wit James Earl Jones in the leading role, supported by Mary Alice, Courtney B. Vance, Franki R. Faison, Ray Aranha, Charles Brown, an Karima Miller, was directed by Lloyd Richards. (4/6/87) (46th Street Theatre, 226 W 46th St. 246-0102. Tuesdays through Satu days at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Satu days at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune—Terrence McNally's enchanting comedy abou sex and the sudden onset of love in an apartment on Tenth Avenue in the Fifties. Kath Bates and Kenneth Welsh give remarkabl performances, under the direction of Pau Benedict. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 13

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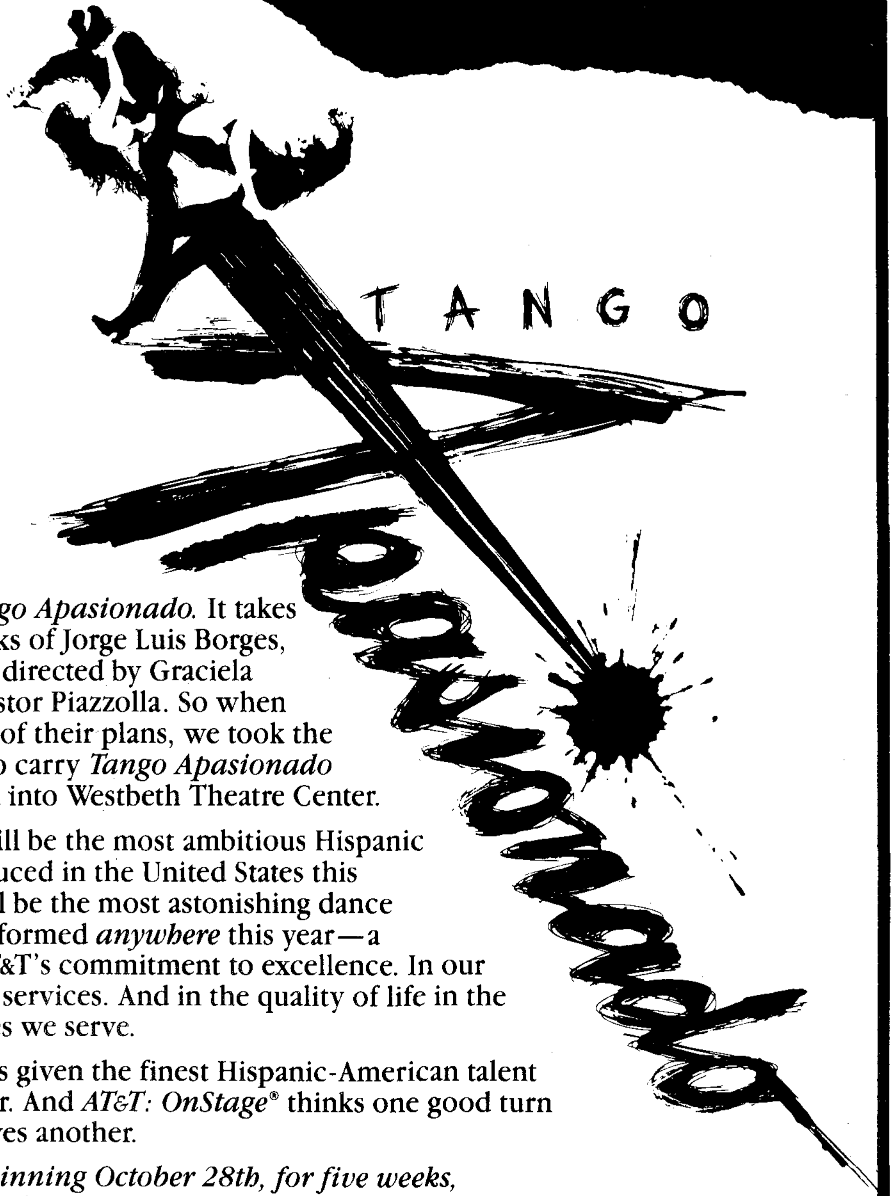

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W. 55th St. 246-8989. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30.)

Into the Woods—A new musical by Stephen Sondheim, mainly based on folktales by the Brothers Grimm. With a book by James Lapine, who also directed. The cast includes Bernadette Peters, Joanna Gleason, Chip Zien, Tom Aldredge, and Robert Westenberg. Previews Wednesday, Nov. 4. Opens officially on Thursday, Nov. 5. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-6363. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8; opening-night curtain at 6:15. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Light Opera of Manhattan—A twenty-six-member company presenting **GIVE MY REGARDS TO BROADWAY**, a musical loosely adapted from George M. Cohan's "Little Johnny Jones." (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays at 2, and Saturdays and Sundays at 3:30. Closes Sunday, Nov. 22.)

The Mahabharata—This nine-hour adaptation (part of the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Next Wave Festival) of the ancient Hindu epic uses pageantry and pseudo-Brechtian stage devices to tell the story of two warring factions of heroes and is utterly unrewarding. Peter Brook and his collaborator, Jean-Claude Carrière, have reduced the poem to a moral tale about two rival superpowers struggling for supremacy and have come up with a bland bid for peace and brotherly love. (11/2/87) (BAM's Majestic Theatre, 651 Fulton St., about a block east of Flatbush Ave. 1-718 636-4100. The schedule is complicated; our best advice is to call the box office. Closes Sunday, Jan. 3.)

Les Misérables—Colm Wilkinson is a strong Jean Valjean and Terrence Mann is his strong pursuer Javert in the musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel, which comes to us from France by way of England. The real standouts of the production, however, are the settings, by John Napier, and the lighting, by David Hersey. But even these, remarkable though they are, are not sustaining enough for the three and a half hours that the show runs. (3/23/87) (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2.)

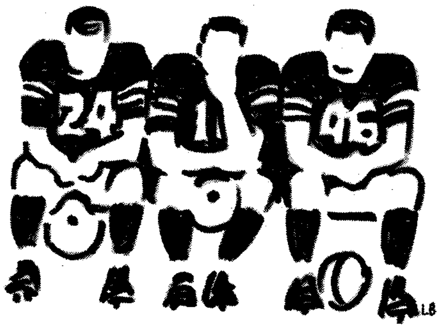
Moms—A celebration of the great black comedienne Moms Mabley, as impersonated by Clarice Taylor. (Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

The Nerd—This farce by the late Larry Shue (author of "The Foreigner") is a source of laughter from beginning to end. It tells the story of an idiotic young man who almost becomes the permanent house guest of an inoffensive architect. Robert Joy gives a first-rate comic performance in the title role. (4/6/87) (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Of Mice and Men—A dreary revival of John Steinbeck's dreary play about a pair of ranch hands—smart little George and big stupid Lennie. The supporting performances of Roger Robinson, Edward Seamon, and Mark Metcalf sporadically brighten things up. (11/2/87) (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 2.)

Oil City Symphony—A musical revue conceived and performed by Mike Craver, Mark Hardwick, Debra Monk, and Mary Murfitt. Preview Wednesday, Nov. 4. Opens officially on Thursday, Nov. 5. (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8; Fridays at 8 and 10:30; and Saturdays at 7 and 10.)

Psycho Beach Party—This romp through early-sixties beach-blanket movies, written by Charles Busch—and significantly funnier than Mr. Busch's earlier work—uses the conventions of drag comedy to lampoon the mores and assumptions of heterosexual behavior. The production—which stars Mr. Busch as a Gidget-like figure with a Marnie-like problem—is directed by Kenneth Elliott and includes a dance number that may single-handedly bring back the limbo. (8/10/87) (Players, 115 Macdougal St. 254-5076. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)



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Rosie's Cafe—This play by R. A. Shiomi, presented by the Pan Asian Repertory Theatre, amounts to a full-length prologue to his delightful "Yellow Fever," of four years ago. The time is the early fifties, the setting is the Japanese section of Vancouver, and Sam Shikaze, super detective, has just graduated from the police academy. Again portrayed by Donald Li, he is as engaging as ever, and so is Carol A. Honda, who returns in the role of a young and lovesick Rosie. (10/26/87) (Playhouse 46, at 423 W. 46th St. 245-2660. Wednesday through Saturday at 8. Matinée Saturday at 2. Closes Saturday, Nov. 7.)

Sarafina!—This musical, an explosion of talent, is an import from South Africa. It was conceived, written, and directed by Mbongeni Ngema, who also, with Hugh Masekela, composed and arranged the score. It is a show about a show that is put on by a brave group of high-school students in the black township of Soweto, and that dramatizes the events in their lives. The events are bleak, but the spirits are blazing, and the acting, dancing, and singing, to a local form of popular music called Mbaqanga, are a wonder. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

A Shayna Maidel—Melissa Gilbert stars in a play by Barbara Lebow. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Sherlock's Last Case—A relentlessly jokey entry in the Baker Street files that is more tiresome than funny. Frank Langella is Holmes, Donal Donnelly is Watson. (8/31/87) (Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 921-8000. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Starlight Express—A bore on roller skates. (3/30/87) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Steel Magnolias—The setting of this first play by Robert Harling is a beauty shop in a small town in Louisiana, and much of the content is the often amusing, wisecracking chatter of the proprietress, her assistant, and four steady customers. A rather pathetic story is told as well. The performances are good, especially those of Betsy Aidem, Rosemary Prinz, and Kate Wilkinson. The impressive setting was designed by Edward T. Gianfrancesco; Pamela Berlin directed. (8/17/87) (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 6 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Talk Radio—A strong and funny play by Eric Bogosian, with Larry Pine as the scornful host of a phone-in radio talk show. (6/8/87) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

Teddy and Alice—Len Cariou and Nancy Hume star in a musical with lyrics by Hal Hackady and a book by Jerome Alden. The score has been adapted from John Philip Sousa tunes by Richard Kapp, who has also provided some original music. Directed by John Driver. Previews through Wednesday, Nov. 11. Opens officially on Thursday, Nov. 12. (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 869-0550. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8; opening-night curtain at 6:15. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

York Theatre Company—A revival of **COMPANY**, the 1970 musical with a score and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim and a book by George Furth. (York Theatre, 2 E. 90th St. 534-5366. Wednesday, Nov. 4, at 8; Fridays, Nov. 6 and 13, at 8; Saturday, Nov. 7, at 3 and 8; Sunday, Nov. 8, at 3 and 7; and final performance Saturday, Nov. 14, at 3.)

Long Runs—**BROADWAY BOUND:** A rueful comedy in which Neil Simon studies the middle-class depths from which he sprang and has kept springing. (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Mondays through Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **LA CAGE AUX FOLLES:** A musical about a pair of tenderhearted middle-aged lovers presiding over a drag-queen night club in Saint-Tropez; the production is one of the most beautiful—and extravagant—ever to reach Broadway. Jerry Herman wrote the music and lyrics; the book is by Harvey Fierstein. (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 757-2626. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, Nov. 15.) . . . **CATS:** Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to the sets and costumes by John Napier. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **COASTAL DISTURBANCES:** Tina Howe's funny and beautiful play about love is set on a private beach on Massachusetts' North Shore. Carole Rothman was the director. (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** 11,456 performances so far. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **42ND STREET:** A musical based on the old Warner Brothers movie, and by no means an improvement on it. Directed and choreographed by the late Gower Champion. (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 398-0280. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **I'M NOT RAPPAPORT:** Herb Gardner's synthetic, though often entertaining, comedy about two old men who share a bench in Central Park, starring Judd Hirsch and Cleavon Little. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **JACKIE MASON'S "THE WORLD ACCORDING TO ME!":** Jackie Mason's material consists almost entirely of outrageous insults addressed to Jews, Italians, Poles, Puerto Ricans, and Wasps. For more than thirty years, Mason's audiences—that is, his victims—have found him hilarious, and the sorry truth of the matter is that he *is* hilarious. (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 719-4099. Tuesdays through Saturdays, except Thursday, Nov. 5, at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.) . . . **ME AND MY GIRL:** An infelicitously rehabilitated British musical out of the thirties, with Jim Dale in the starring role. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 246-0102. Tuesdays through

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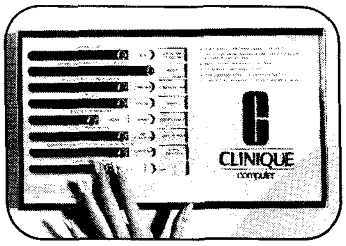

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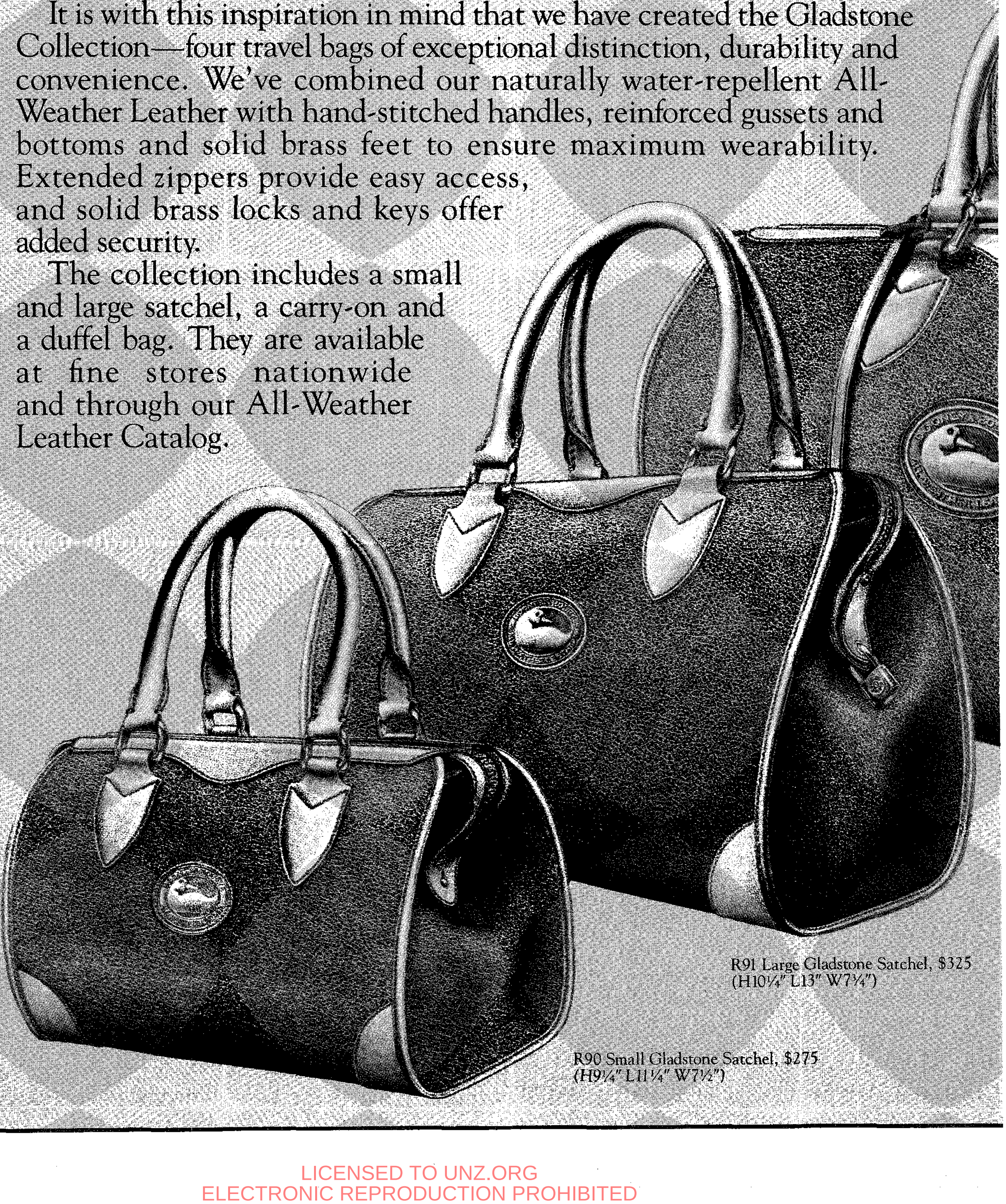

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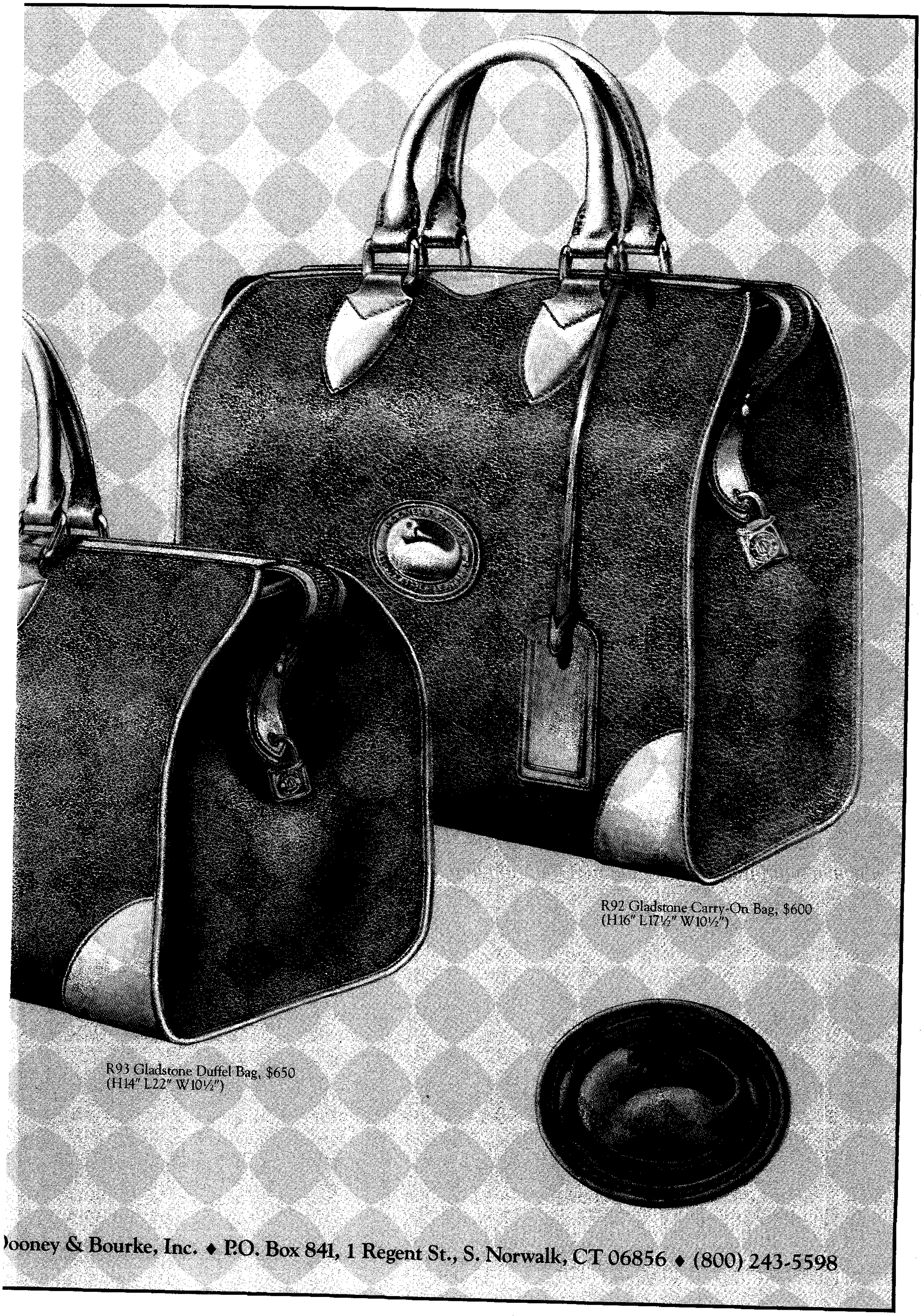

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Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **OH! CALCUTTA!:** A collection of short sketches that purport to give us a refreshing view of sex and do not. (Edison, 240 W. 47th St. 302-2302. Mondays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 9:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

MISCELLANY

NEW WAVE FESTIVAL—Presenting **ANNE TERESA DE KEERSMAEKER & THE ROSAS COMPANY**—"Elena's Aria." Wednesday through Saturday, Nov. 4-7, at 8, and Sunday, Nov. 8, at 2. . . . **MUSIC BY STEVE REICH**—"Three Movements" and "The Four Sections" (New York première), performed by the Brooklyn Philharmonic, Kent Nagano conducting; and "Electric Counterpoint" (première), performed by Pat Metheny, guitar. Thursday through Saturday, Nov. 5-7, at 8, and Sunday, Nov. 8, at 2. . . . **THE NINA WIENER DANCE COMPANY**—"Fierce Attachments" and "Transatlantic Light." Wednesday, Nov. 11, at 7, and Thursday through Saturday, Nov. 12-14, at 8. . . . **THE PETER ZUMMO ORCHESTRAS AND ELLIOTT SHARP AND CARBON**—Friday and Saturday, Nov. 13-14, at 8. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100.) . . . **NOTE:** A listing for "The Mahabharata" is under "Plays and Musicals," above.

JULIE WILSON: FROM WEILL TO SONDHEIM (A CONCERT)—The singer, with accompanist William Roy. (Kaufman, 534 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Mondays and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

THULI IN CONCERT—Thuli Dumakude performing traditional and contemporary songs of black South Africa. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. Saturdays at 10:30 P.M. and Sundays at 6.)

ON SECOND AVENUE—A musical revue in Yiddish and English. (Norman Thomas, 111 E. 33rd St. 685-3233. Saturdays at 3 and 8, and Sundays at 2 and 5:30.)

DANCE

JOFFREY BALLET—Wednesday evening, Nov. 4: "La Fille Mal Gardée." . . . ¶ Thursday evening, Nov. 5: "Arden Court," "Three Preludes," "La Vivandière Pas de Six," and "Force Field." . . . ¶ Friday evening, Nov. 6: "Parade," "L'Après-Midi d'un Faune," and "Le Sacre du Printemps." . . . ¶ Saturday evening, Nov. 7: "The Dream," "Monotones," and "Les Patineurs." . . . ¶ Sunday matinée, Nov. 8: "Arden Court," "Three Preludes," "La Vivandière Pas de Six," and "Force Field." . . . ¶ Sunday evening, Nov. 8: "Parade," "L'Après-Midi d'un Faune," and "Le Sacre du Printemps." . . . ¶ Tuesday evening, Nov. 10: "Light Rain," "L'Air d'Esprit," "Round of Angels," and "The Clowns." . . . ¶ Wednesday evening, Nov. 11: "Arden Court," "Three Preludes," "La Vivandière Pas de Six," and "Force Field." . . . ¶ Thursday evening, Nov. 12: "Birthday Variations," "Untitled," "Love Songs," and "The Clowns." . . . ¶ Friday evening, Nov. 13: "The Gardens of Boboli," "Valentine," "Confetti," and "Cloven Kingdom." . . . ¶ Saturday evening, Nov. 14: "Light Rain," "L'Air d'Esprit," "Round of Angels," and "The Clowns." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 2. Through Sunday, Nov. 22.)

GARTH FAGAN'S BUCKET DANCE THEATRE—A one-week engagement—Wednesday, Nov. 4, and Saturday, Nov. 7, at 8, and Sunday, Nov. 8, at 2: "Prelude," "Oatka Trail," "Passion Distanced," and "Traipsing Through the May." . . . ¶ Thursday and Friday, Nov. 5-6, at 8, and Sunday, Nov. 8, at 7:30: "Sojourn," "Traipsing Through the May," and "Mask Mix Masque." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800.)

DANCE THEATRE WORKSHOP—Performances by two contemporary dance companies. **SUSAN FOSTER:** Thursday through Saturday, Nov. 5-7, at 8, and Sunday, Nov. 8, at 3. . . . **CREACH/KOESTER:** Thursday through Saturday, Nov. 12-14, at 8, and Sunday, Nov. 15, at 3. (219 W. 19th St. 924-0077.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and nightclub proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

ALGONQUIN HOTEL, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Home of the bon mot, now owned by Caesar Park Hotels, a subsidiary of a Japanese conglomerate. Montgomery, Plant & Stritch—two women, one man, and an ampersand—sing in the Oak Room through Saturday, Nov. 7. **ANDREA MARCOVICCI** begins a three-week stint on Tuesday, Nov. 10. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen. Dining.

BALLROOM, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A big cabaret on the edge of Chelsea, in the heart of the fur and fashion-student districts. **BLOSSOM DEARIE** has a new hairdo (short and up-to-date) and a new record (Volume X in her collecting works), and you can hear her sing some of the songs on it ("Moonlight Saving Time," "When in Rome," "My Attorney, Bernie") at six-thirty Wednesdays through Saturdays. Jack Gilford has the floor at nine Tuesdays through Thursdays and at nine and eleven Fridays and Saturdays.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A really blue but not really New York jazz club; the idea for the brass plaques that are engraved with the names of visiting jazz stars and embedded in the blue tables appears to have been borrowed from Hollywood. **BILLY ECKSTINE** ("the sonorous B.," as Ellington called him) holds forth, with his trio in support, through Sunday, Nov. 8; Angela Bofill sings here starting Tuesday, Nov. 10. Music from nine. Dining.

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—A vast pillared emporium that caters to various musical tastes and that accommodates people who like to stop having fun at ten-thirty or eleven as well as the conventional types who don't like to start until then. Wednesday, Nov. 4, Marti Jones and Don Dixon; Thursday, Nov. 5, fusion guitarist Lee Ritenour; Saturday, Nov. 7, country-rock vets J. D. Souther and Karla Bonoff; Monday, Nov. 9, the Strawbs; Tuesday, Nov. 10, wizard flatpicker **DOC WATSON;** and Thursday through Sunday, Nov. 12-15, the Oakland soul band **TOWER OF POWER.** Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining.

BRADLEY'S, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A great up-close view from a barstool (unless there are a lot of standees, which is usually the case) of first-rate pianists and bassists. **LARRY WILLIS** works with **SANTI DEBRIANO** through Saturday, Nov. 7; Sunday, Nov. 8, will be devoted to one half of the Wynton Marsalis quartet, pianist **MARCUS ROBERTS** and bassist **ROBERT HURST III;** and on Monday, Nov. 9, and **JOANNE BRACKEEN** and **CALVIN HILL** swing into action. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

CARLOS I, 432 Sixth Ave., at 10th St. (982-3260)—Long communal tables swathed in pink and a bandstand panelled in oak. Mauricio Smith, a Panamanian flutist, leads a sextet Wednesday and Thursday, Nov. 4-5; **BENNY CARTER,** who just turned eighty and whose alto saxophone is a model of old-time grace, slips in with a quartet for three nights starting Friday, Nov. 6; and on Tuesday, Nov. 10, singer **ERNESTINE ANDERSON** goes to work. Mondays are set aside for the father-and-son guitar team of **BUCKY** and **JOHN PIZZARELLI.** Music from nine every night but Monday, when it begins at eight. Dining.

CARLYLE HOTEL, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The figures on the walls of the Café Carlyle—a nude at her easel; a leaping poodle; a guitarist in a harlequin outfit; an unpedigreed dog with a bonnet in its mouth—are by Marcel Vertès, and the personage on the piano bench is **BOBBY SHORT.** He's flanked by **BEVERLY PEER** (bass fiddle) and **ROBBIE SCOTT** (drums). Sets at ten and midnight Tuesdays through Saturdays. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in the Bemelmans Bar, **BARBARA CARROLL** presides at the piano from nine-forty-five Tuesdays through Saturdays.

FAT TUESDAY'S, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—There's not a lot of elbow- or headroom in this downstairs jazz club, but the musicians sometimes make out-of-body travel possible. **OREGON,** a long-running quartet that plays pretty, Eastern-influenced, cloudland jazz, will be present through Sunday, Nov. 8, and on Tuesday, Nov. 10, tenor saxophonist **JOE HENDERSON** moves in with his quintet. Mondays remain in the hands of guitarist **LES PAUL.** Music from eight. Dining.

GREENE STREET, 101 Greene St. (925-2415)—Only slightly smaller than an airplane hangar but considerably fancier. On clear nights, the piano, situated in a grove of palms in the south-central region of the dining room, is visible from the bar. The schedule: Wednesday, Nov. 4, Tardo Hammer; Thursday through Saturday, Nov. 5-7, **BROOKS KERR** (with bassist **AL HALL** on Friday and Saturday); and starting Tuesday, Nov. 10, Nat Jones. Sets begin at seven Tuesdays through Thursdays, and at seven-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays. Closed Mondays.

GREGORY'S, 1149 First Ave., at 63rd St. (371-2220)—A small, dark bar with ancient marching-band instruments on the walls, Art Tatum and Earl Hines on the jukebox, and an upright piano that seats four (not counting the pianist). Wednesdays through Saturdays, **BOB DOROUGH** is in the catbird seat, singing such things as "Your Feet's Too Big," Randy Newman's "Simon Smith and the Amazing Dancing Bear," Henry Nemo's " 'Tis Autumn" (which he embellishes with whistling-wind sounds), and his own "Bijou" (a bossa-nova-ish song about love and insanity). **BILL TAKAS,** his longtime partner, is on bass. Sundays belong to singer-pianist Marty Phillips and his bassist, and Tuesdays to guitarist **CHUCK WAYNE'S** trio. Music from ten.

KNICKERBOCKER, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A busy corner bar and restaurant with a piano at the center of things. **PETER MALINVERNI** plays it, with bassist **MICHAEL MOORE** at his side, through Saturday, Nov. 7; starting Tuesday, Nov. 10, **STEVE KUHN** and **RON CARTER** work in tandem. Pianist **HARRY CONNICK, JR.,** the latest good news from New Orleans, flies all by himself on Sundays and Mondays. Music from nine-thirty.

KNITTING FACTORY, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—Probably the only place in town that features avant-garde jazz, Easy Now medicinal tea, homemade yogurt, and smoothies. The songs that **MIKEL ROUSE** writes for his mysteriously named rock band, **TIREZ TIREZ,** summon up Talking Heads and Steve Reich and James Brown in a downtown loft. They have a high minimalist shine, and they're easy to listen to, and their emotional content is low. Tirez Tirez performs on Monday, Nov. 9. The rest of the lineup: Wednesday, Nov. 4, Hans Koch and Martin Schutz, with **JEMEEL MOONDOC;** Thursday, Nov. 5, **JOHN ZORN & ARTO LINDSAY;** Friday, Nov. 6, Lounge Lizards Roy Nathanson and Curtis Fowlkes;

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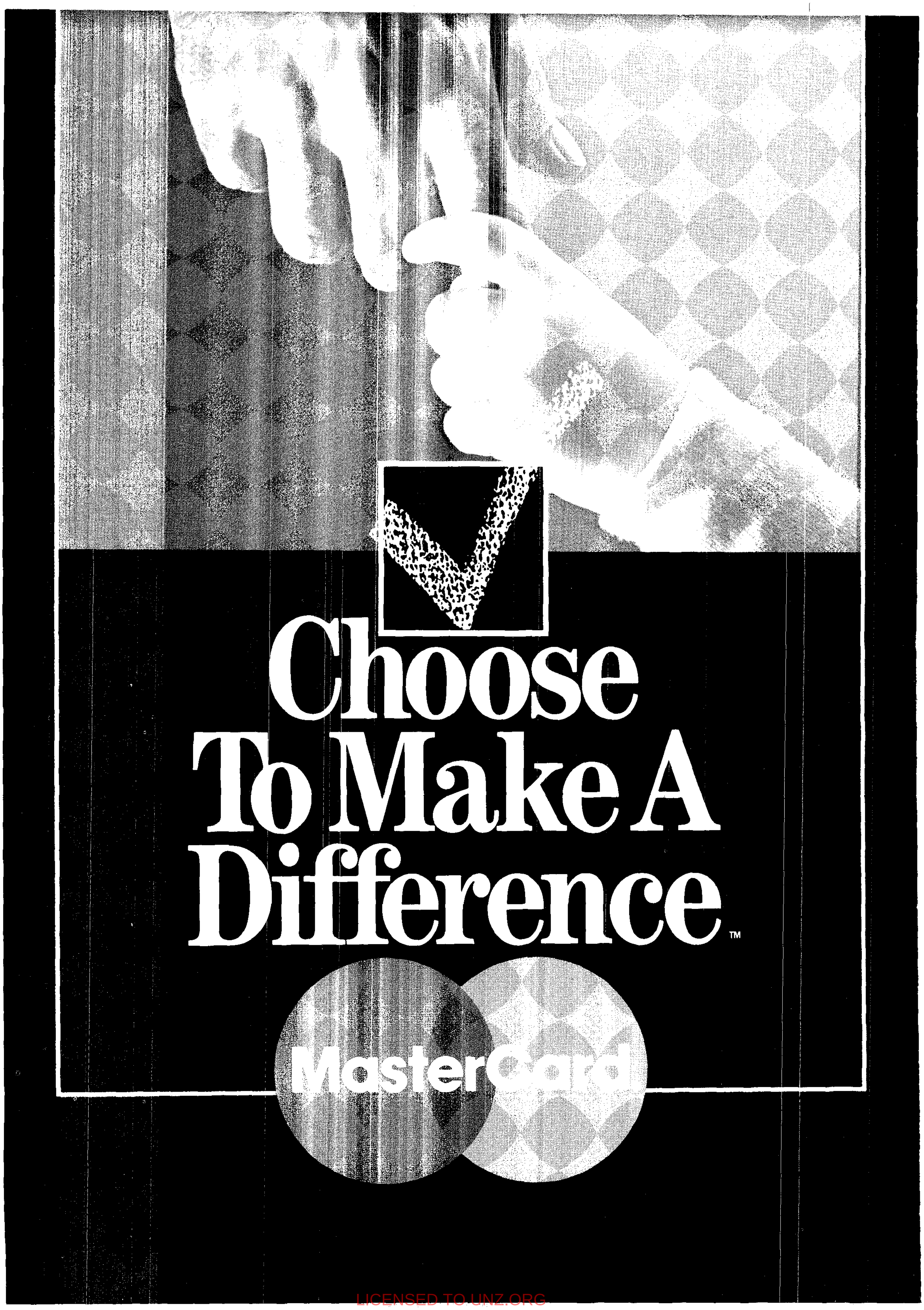
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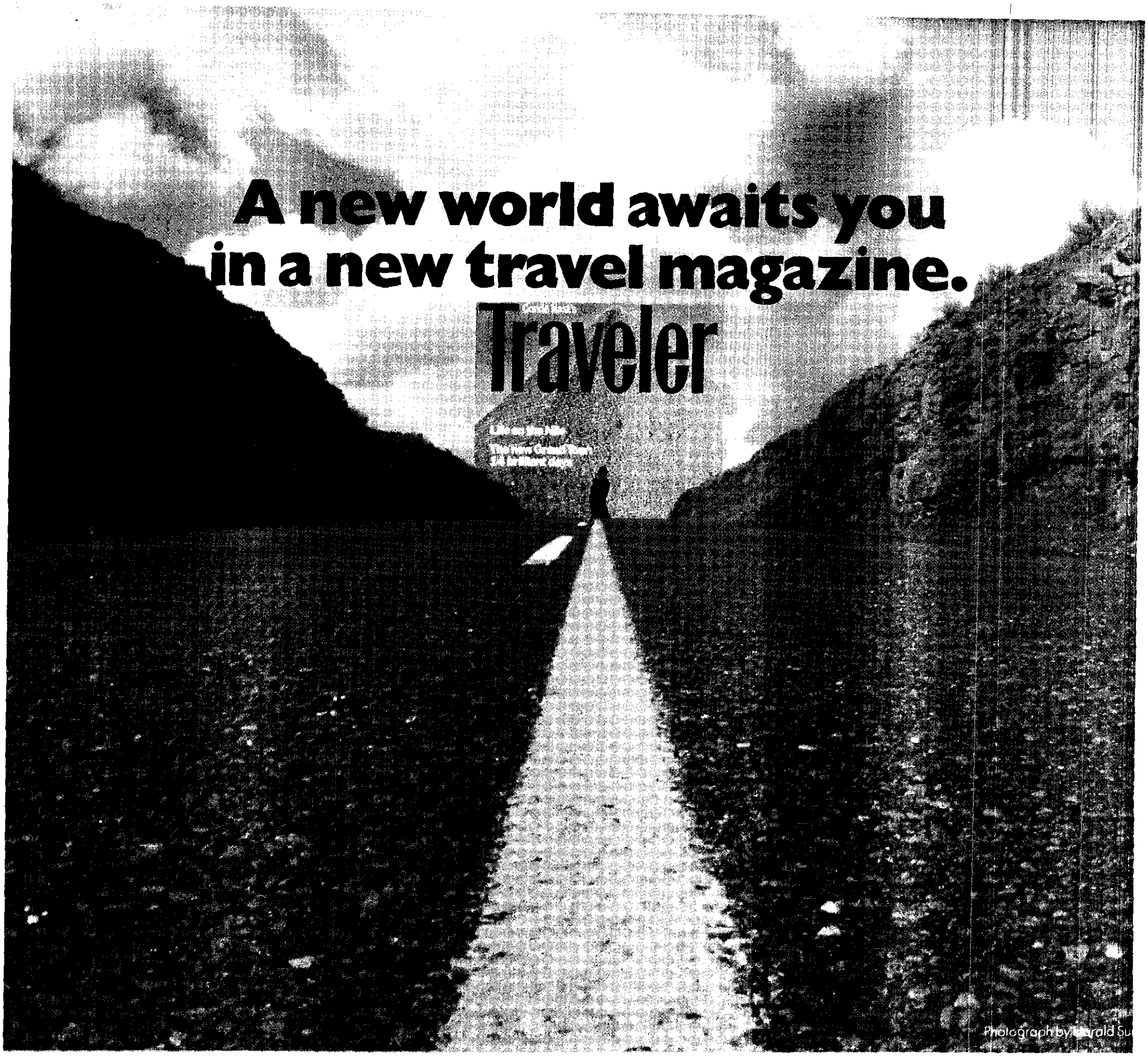
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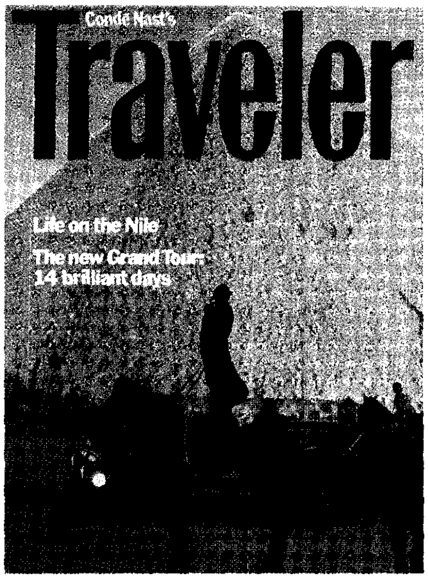
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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Sunday, Nov. 8, the Walter Thompson trio; and Tuesday, Nov. 10, trombonist **GEORGE LEWIS** and others. Music after nine.

LONE STAR CAFÉ, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—This hangout for homesick Texans, French tourists, and local yokels brags that it's "the biggest and best honky-tonk north of Abilene." Big it ain't, but it does feature some genuine honky-tonk music, a souvenir stand, and TV monitors (which permit you to watch the action onstage in case your view of it is blocked by a cowboy or a structural element). Wednesday and Thursday, Nov. 4-5, a tribute to Jaco Pastorius, with **PAT METHENY** (on Nov. 4 only), **RANDY BRECKER**, and others; Friday and Saturday, Nov. 6-7, swamp-blues pianist **DR. JOHN**; Monday, Nov. 9, upper-atmosphere trumpeter **MAYNARD FERGUSON**, plus Larry Rivers (the painter, who moonlights as a saxophonist), trumpeter Howard Brofsky, and their followers; Tuesday and Wednesday, Nov. 10-11, **LIL' ED & THE BLUES IMPERIALS** (a Chicago blues band), with **JOE (KING) CARRASCO** on Tuesday; and Saturday, Nov. 14, the **ORIGINAL CRICKETS** (two of whom were Buddy Holly's sidekicks). Music after nine. Hot vittles.

MICHAEL'S PUB, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—Unicorns and lions on the walls, well-heeled cats on the banquettes, and the Mamas and the Papas on the bandstand. The old flower-pop quartet, which was put partly back together in the early eighties by original headman John Phillips, is now made up of Phillips; his daughter, Mackenzie Phillips; Spanky McFarlane (of the soft-rock group Spanky & Our Gang); and Scott McKenzie (who sang "San Francisco," Phillips' 1967 hymn to hippiedom). Shows at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty Tuesdays through Saturdays. On Mondays after nine-thirty, Woody Allen is likely to turn up to play clarinet with the New Orleans Funeral and Ragtime Orchestra. Dining. Closed Sundays.

MIKELL'S, 760 Columbus Ave., at 97th St. (864-8832)—A spiffy uptown bar and restaurant, with signed photographs of some swinging non-musicians on the walls (Reggie Jackson smiling shyly, Dave Winfield tuning up in the cage) and some heavy hitters on the bandstand. **WHO IT IS**, an R. & B. outfit led by guitarist **CORNELL DUPREE** and featuring pianist **RICHARD TEE**, works out Friday and Saturday, Nov. 6-7. Music from about ten until two.

RITZ, 119 E. 11th St. (254-2800)—Fifty years ago, people practiced the jitterbug and the foxtrot in this ballroom; today's patrons listen mainly to rock, which issues from speakers the size of mobile homes, and sometimes engage in a combination of exercise and intimacy known as slam dancing. Thursday, Nov. 5, the Jesus & Mary Chain; Saturday, Nov. 7, Père Ubu; Thursday, Nov. 12, the **RADIATORS**; Friday, Nov. 13, That Petrol Emotion; and Saturday, Nov. 14, the Screaming Blue Messiahs. Shows begin at nine Sundays through Thursdays, and at eleven Fridays and Saturdays.

SOUNDS OF BRAZIL, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A musical melting pot: samba bands, African all-percussion ensembles, reggae outfits, out-there American jazz bands, and salsa groups all pass through this former luncheonette. Wednesday and Thursday, Nov. 4-5, reggae singer **JUDY MOWATT**; Friday, Nov. 6, **TABOU COMBO**; Saturday, Nov. 7, **LOREMIL MACHADO & THE SARAVA BAHIA BAND**; Tuesday, Nov. 10, Urban Blight; Thursday, Nov. 12, **PAQUITO D'RIVERA**'s Cuban bop band; and Friday, Nov. 13, the **MIGHTY SPARROW**. Music from nine Tuesdays through Thursdays, and from eleven Fridays and Saturdays. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

SPEAKEASY, 107 Macdougal St. (598-9670)—The site, many moons ago, of Rienzi's, a coffeehouse on the beaten path; nowadays, it's home to folkies, bluegrass fiddlers, and others of a non-electronic bent. The schedule: Friday, Nov. 6, **CLARENCE (GATEMOUTH) BROWN**; Saturday, Nov. 7, the Dharma Bums, a raga-to-bluegrass outfit; Sunday, Nov. 8, the Wretched Refuse String Band; Tuesday, Nov. 10, French guitarist **PIERRE BENSUSAN**; Thursday, Nov. 12, banjo picker **TONY TRISCHKA**; and Saturday, Nov. 14, Jack Hardy. Music from about eight-thirty. Dining.

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SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—A bustling knotty-pine-and-brick-walled jazz room. **TOMMY FLANAGAN**, one of the wonders of bop piano, will be here with bassist **GEORGE MRAZ** and drummer **AL FOSTER** through Sunday, Nov. 8; **HENRY BUTLER**, a New Orleans-born pianist (Professor Longhair was among his teachers, but he leans more toward the modal mysticism of McCoy Tyner) and singer (he has a timber-shivering bass-baritone), brings in his quartet on Tuesday, Nov. 10. The **MICROSCOPIC SEPTET** performs on Monday, Nov. 9. Shows from about ten. Dining.

SWEETWATERS, 170 Amsterdam Ave., at 67th St. (873-4100)—What would a night club be without smoke, mirrors, and a white piano? It wouldn't be this sleek jazz and soul room. The Toys, a Queens girl group that sprang up in the mid-sixties, sing here through Saturday, Nov. 7; Billy Paul, a Philadelphia crooner who hit the charts in 1972 with Gamble & Huff's "Me and Mrs. Jones," has the floor Thursday through Saturday, Nov. 12-14. Music after nine. Dining.

TRAMPS, 125 E. 15th St. (777-5077)—"Irish" is what the canopy above the entrance to this bar says, but rock and roll is what the boys and girls in the back room mainly do. Wednesday, Nov. 4, Moonfire and Yelling Beat; Friday and Saturday, Nov. 6-7, Chicago bluesman **OTIS RUSH**; Sunday, Nov. 8, the **SURREAL MC COYS**; Wednesday, Nov. 11, the Crunge and the Scam, with Fiona Kennedy; Thursday, Nov. 12, a benefit for Jello Biafra, the boss of the now kaput San Francisco punk-rock band the Dead Kennedys, who ran up large legal bills while defending himself (successfully) against a distribution-of-harmful-matter-to-a-minor charge; and Friday and Saturday, Nov. 13-14, West Coast bluesmen **SONNY RHODES & FRANKIE LEE**. Shows after nine-thirty.

VILLAGE GATE, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—Monday nights in the gym-size downstairs room are reserved for salsa bands and their whistling, clapping, table-drumming fans. On Nov. 9, singer **HECTOR LAVOE** and his orchestra share the stage with the **FANIA ALL-STAR SIX** and flutist Nestor Torres, the guest soloist. Music from nine-thirty. . . . ¶ One flight up, in the Terrace Bar, where business and conversation are often at boom level, you'll find the piano-bass team of **HILTON RUIZ** and **JIMMY ROWSER** through Sunday, Nov. 8, and the duo of **BILL MAYS** and **SANTI DEBRIANO** starting Tuesday, Nov. 10. On Tuesdays, the visiting twosome trades sets with jazz harpist **DAPHNE HELLMAN'S** trio. Music from ten.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—People from all over the world descend the stairs to this ancient jazz club; many of them later emerge from it in an excited condition. **JON FADDIS**, a fine, sunny-toned trumpeter in the Dizzy Gillespie tradition, leads a quartet through Sunday, Nov. 8. **SPHERE**, the quartet that takes its name and some of its repertoire from Thelonious Monk and that is made up of **CHARLES ROUSE** (tenor saxophone), **KENNY BARRON** (piano), **BUSTER WILLIAMS** (bass), and **BEN RILEY** (drums), will be around for six nights starting Tuesday, Nov. 10. On Mondays, the foreman of the **MEL LEWIS ORCHESTRA** settles in behind his Pearl drums and Istanbul cymbals and lets his crew rip. Music from ten.

WEST END, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—The big room in this student rest stop (Columbia U. is across the street) has a non-institutional cafeteria, a bar that can seat a marching band, and a jukebox. The smaller room has tables, booths, a couple of hanging plants, and live jazz. Guitarist **JOSHUA BREAKSTONE** leads a combo through Sunday, Nov. 8. On Mondays, comedians stand up and fall down. Shows from about nine.

ZINNO, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—If you like pictures of cows, there's a good one here, by the British painter Malcolm Morley, of some Holsteins adrift in a Turneresque landscape. There's also jazz, which flows peaceably from a passageway between the front-room bar and the back-room restaurant. Guitarist **JOE BECK** and pianist **LONNIE SMITH** work together through Saturday, Nov. 7, and on Monday, Nov. 9, a tradition-minded trio composed of cornettist **RUBY BRAFF** (who will surprise you in the midst of one of his quiet, winding solos by emitting a high-register blast, and try to surprise you again by introducing himself as Miles Davis), guitarist **HOWARD ALDEN**, and bassist **JACK LESBERG** gets going. On Sundays, guitarist **GENE BERTONCINI** and bassist **MICHAEL MOORE** continue their long-running collaboration. Music from eight every night but Sunday, when it begins at seven.

JAZZ / FOLK / ROCK CONCERTS, PERSONAL APPEARANCES, ETC.

HIGHLIGHTS IN JAZZ—With the Billy Taylor trio, the Roy Haynes quartet, Jackie Paris, and Candido. (Loeb Student Center Auditorium, New York University, Washington Sq. S. and LaGuardia Pl. 998-4949. Thursday, Nov. 5, at 8.)

THE CHI-LITES, BLUE MAGIC, AND SILK—Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 863-5400. Friday, Nov. 6, at 7 and 9:30.

SWEET HONEY IN THE ROCK—Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Friday, Nov. 6, at 8.

SIMPLY RED—With Danny Wilson. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. Friday and Saturday, Nov. 6-7, at 8.)

GRASSROOTS GOSPEL FESTIVAL—Friday, Nov. 6, at 8: The Original Blind Boys of Alabama, the No Name Gospel Singers, and Sister Sadie & the Famous Biblettes. . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 7, at 8: The Original Blind Boys of Alabama, the Heavenly Tones, and the Golden Sons. (Triplex Theatre, 199 Chambers St. 618-1980.)

HEAVENLY JAZZ CONCERT SERIES—The second in a series of five concerts, this one performed by Dave McKenna. (Church of the Heavenly Rest, Fifth Ave. at 90th St. Sunday, Nov. 8, at 5. For information about tickets, call 369-8040.)

LOVE AND ROCKETS—Beacon Theatre. Thursday, Nov. 12, at 8.

JEAN-LUC PONTY—Carnegie Hall. Thursday, Nov. 12, at 8.

RUBY BRAFF AND DICK HYMAN—New School, 66 W. 12th St. Friday, Nov. 13, at 6. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.

HOLLY NEAR—With Ferron. (Carnegie Hall. Friday, Nov. 13, at 8.)

SQUEEZE—With Icehouse. (Madison Square Garden. 563-8300. Friday, Nov. 13, at 8.)

DAVID BROMBERG ENSEMBLE AND JORMA KAUKONEN—Beacon Theatre. Saturday, Nov. 14, at 8.

BEAUSOLEIL—Symphony Space. Saturday, Nov. 14, at 8.

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

TRINE BUMILLER—Abstract paintings. Through Dec. 5. (Hamilton, 19 E. 71st St.)

STUART DAVIS (1892-1964) / **ARNOLD FRIEDMAN** (1874-1946)—Paintings from the early twenties, when the artist first used images (an eggbeater, for instance) that continued to show up throughout his career. / Paintings by another American modernist. Through Dec. 26. (Salander-O'Reilly, 22 E. 80th St. Open Mondays.)

Stephen De Staebler—Fragmented figures in bronze and ceramic. Through Saturday, Nov. 14. (CDS Gallery, 13 E. 75th St. Open Mondays.)

Richard Diebenkorn—Recent works on paper, most of them paintings in mixed mediums. Through Nov. 28. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St.)

Fernand Léger (1881-1955)—A benefit loan exhibition of fifty oils. Through Dec. 12. (Acquavella, 18 E. 79th St. Open Mondays.)

Doug Maguire—Landscape paintings of the Catskills and other areas of New York State. Through Nov. 21. (Perlow, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

Paul Manes—Thickly painted abstract canvases. Through Dec. 5. (Kouros, 23 E. 73rd St.)

Joan Miró (1893-1983)—Sculptures, paintings, and drawings. Through Saturday, Nov. 14. (Weintraub, 988 Madison Ave., at 77th St.)

Grégoire Müller—Small oils of faces or parts of faces done in the course of the artist's recent travels, and two large figure paintings done after he settled in a studio (in Switzerland), and could use bigger canvases. Through Nov. 28. (McCoy, 19 E. 71st St.)

Roland Petersen—Figurative paintings from the sixties by a Bay Area artist. Through Nov. 28. (Vanderwoude Tananbaum, 24 E. 81st St.)

The Animal in Sculpture—A big show of tabletop-size bronzes of dogs, horses, birds, and animals of the wild by nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century specialists in the genre. Through Dec. 1. (Graham, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St. Open Mondays.)

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

Frederic Amat—Large-scale relief paintings. Through Nov. 21. (Frumkin, 50 W. 57th St.)

Karel Appel—Recent paintings and sculptures. Through Nov. 28. (Marisa del Re, 41 E. 57th St.)

William Conlon / Joel Perlman—Geometric abstractions on canvas. Through Saturday, Nov. 7. / Five welded-steel sculptures. Through Saturday, Nov. 14. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)

Robert Cottingham—Realist paintings and drawings of neon signs, storefronts, and movie marquees. Through Nov. 21. (Gimpel, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

André Derain (1880-1954)—Paintings and drawings. Through Nov. 28. (Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Llyn Foulkes—Pop-inspired grisaille paintings from the sixties. Through Saturday, Nov. 14. (Kent, 41 E. 57th St.)

Maurice Freedman (1904-85)—Paintings of New England scenes. Through Dec. 5. (Midtown, 11 E. 57th St.)

Philip Grausman—Six-foot-tall portraits in metal, as well as life-size heads, a peacock, and a goose. Through Nov. 25. (Schoelkopf, 50 W. 57th St.)

Frances Hynes—Simplified architectural shapes painted on vast expanses of linen canvas. Through Nov. 25. (Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St.)

Robert Jessup—A two-gallery exhibit of allegorical paintings and drawings relating to the four seasons. (Siegel, 24 W. 57th St. Through Nov. 28. . . . ¶ Walls, 137 Greene St. Through Dec. 5. Opens at 1 on Sundays.)

Gerome Kamrowski—Paintings and collages from the forties. Through Nov. 21. (Washburn, 41 E. 57th St.)

Gary Kuehn—Wall-mounted strands of steel twisted in the center. Through Saturday, Nov. 14. (Drake, 50 W. 57th St.)

Alun Leach-Jones—Abstract paintings and pastels. Through Dec. 5. (Ross, 50 W. 57th St.)

Jacques Lipchitz (1891-1973)—Freestanding sculptures and wall reliefs from his Cubist period. Through Saturday, Nov. 14. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Ida Lorentzen—Stylized paintings of sparse interiors. Through Nov. 28. (De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St.)

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Charles Moser—Rural landscapes. Through Nov. 28. (Schmidt Bingham, 41 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Picasso (1881-1973)—Cubist-period paintings, drawings, sketchbooks, and prints. Through Dec. 23. (Krugier, 41 E. 57th St.)

Harry Roseman—Small bronze sculptural tableaux of landscapes, seascapes, and interiors. Through Nov. 28. (Davis & Langdale, 231 E. 60th St.)

Ed Ruscha—New paintings. Through Nov. 28. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

Isabelle H. Siegel—Abstract bronze sculptures with a variety of patinas. Through Wednesday, Nov. 11. (Kraushaar, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Saul Steinberg—Large-scale drawings, plus wood tables adorned with, among other objects, miniature beds and buildings. Through Nov. 28. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St.)

Donald Sultan—Recent paintings. Through Nov. 28. (Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St.)

Jerome Witkin—A five-panel series of oils titled "A Jesus for Our Time," and other paintings. Through Nov. 21. (French, 41 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Group Show—Paintings, drawings, and sculptures by ten British artists, among them Frank Auerbach, Barbara Hepworth, and Graham Sutherland. Through Dec. 5. (Herstand, 24 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Sculpture—Joseph Beuys, Yves Klein, Louise Bourgeois, Robert Morris, and six other artists are each represented by an abstract piece. Through Dec. 5. (Galerie Lelong, 20 W. 57th St.)

GALLERIES—SoHo

Ida Applebroog—New paintings. Through Saturday, Nov. 14. (Feldman, 31 Mercer St.)

Siah Armajani / Buckminster Fuller (1895-1983)—Three large freestanding mixed-medium sculptures that evoke architectural elements. Through Dec. 5. / Drawings, many for his Dymaxion car and house and for the geodesic dome. Through Dec. 12. (Protetch, 560 Broadway.)

Charles Arnoldi—New versions of his "Chainsaw" paintings (zigzag compositions made with sawed plywood), similarly patterned wall pieces using cross-sections of twigs, and several large bronze sculptures. Through Nov. 28. (Cowles, 420 West Broadway.)

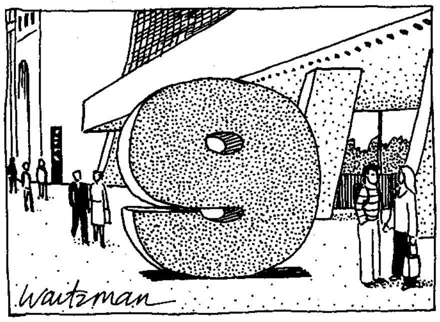
Robert Beauchamp—Recent expressionist paintings. Through Nov. 21. (Gruenebaum, 415 West Broadway.)

Robert Bechtle / Aris Koutroulis—Realist paintings. / Patterned drip paintings. Through Saturday, Nov. 7. (O.K. Harris, 383 West Broadway.)

Gretna Campbell (1923-87)—A memorial exhibition of her landscape paintings. Through Nov. 28. (Ingber, 415 West Broadway.)

Bernard Chaet—Nature still-lifes and plein-air landscapes of Rockport, Massachusetts. Through Nov. 28. (Pearl, 420 West Broadway.)

Porfirio Di Donna (1942-86)—The artist's first and last paintings—from figurative to ab stract. Through Nov. 28. (112 Green Street.)



George Dudding—Copper wall sculptures ligh ed to cast shadows that sometimes seem t wrap right around the sculptures themselve Through Nov. 28. (Beitzel, 113 Greene St.)

Biff Elrod / Don Eddy—Large-scale figurati paintings. / Color photographs with fruit toys, and Disney characters added in colore pencil. Through Nov. 28. (Schreiber-Cutle 171 Spring St.)

Helmut Federle—A two-gallery exhibit of ab stract geometric paintings. Through Satu day, Nov. 14. (Gladstone, 99 Greene St. . . ¶ Boone, 417 West Broadway.)

April Gornik—Paintings and drawings of dra matic sweeping landscapes imagined by th artist. Through Saturday, Nov. 14. (Thorp 103 Prince St.)

Joseph Haske—Abstract acrylic paintings o wood. Through Nov. 28. (Davis, 568 Broad way.)

Martin Kippenberger—A sculptural installatio consisting of rough wood constructions tha incorporate various objects—a bronze broom handle and an abstract painting, for in stance. Through Nov. 28. (Metro Picture 150 Greene St.)

Joseph Kosuth—Five new works. Through Sat urday, Nov. 14. (Gorney, in a new locatio at 100 Greene St.)

Susan Laufer—New abstract mixed-mediu paintings. Through Saturday, Nov. 14. (Ger mans van Eck, 420 West Broadway.)

Robert Mangold—Recent diptychs on irregula ly shaped canvases. Through Nov. 28 (Cooper, 155 Wooster St.)

Karl Mann—Assemblages. Through Saturday Nov. 14. (Green, 152 Wooster St.)

Joseph Nechvatal—A new series of painting whose execution involved the use of a com puter. Through Nov. 28. (Alexander, 5 Wooster St.)

Joshua Neustein—Fourteen cartographic paint ings, including "Eastern Seaboard U.S.A.," sort of map of the East Coast with part of a orange-mesh New York City trash can jut ting out from the surface. Through Nov. 28 (Exit Art, 578 Broadway.)

Beatrice Riese / Joel Tarlowe—Pattern paint ings. / Pastel landscapes. Through Sunday Nov. 8. (Pleiades, 164 Mercer St.)

Susan Rothenberg—New paintings. Throug Saturday, Nov. 14. (Sperone Westwater, 14 Greene St.)

Peter Schuyff—Large-scale paintings of geo metric abstractions. Through Saturday, Nov 14. (Castelli, 142 Greene St.) . . . ¶ Water colors. Through Nov. 15. (Hearn, 735 E. 9t St., just west of Avenue D. Opens at Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Ted Stamm (1945-84)—Paintings on shape canvases, and drawings. Through Nov. 21 (Condeso-Lawler, 76 Greene St.)

Sharon E. Sutton—Very precisely made mixed medium collages incorporating grids, circles and enlarged fragments of music scores, b an architect who once played the French hor professionally. Through Nov. 21. (Kelly, 591 Broadway.)

Mark Tansey—New monochromatic allegorica paintings. Through Saturday, Nov. 14. (Marcus, 578 Broadway.)

Elena Urbaitis—Sculptures with expansiv painted planes, some textured and som smooth. Through Nov. 21. (Phoenix, 568 Broadway.)

Anneke van Brussel—Meticulously detailed still-lifes done in watercolor by this Dutch artist in her first one-woman show in New York Also, portraits and dog and cat pictures Through Nov. 18. (Milliken, 98 Prince St.)

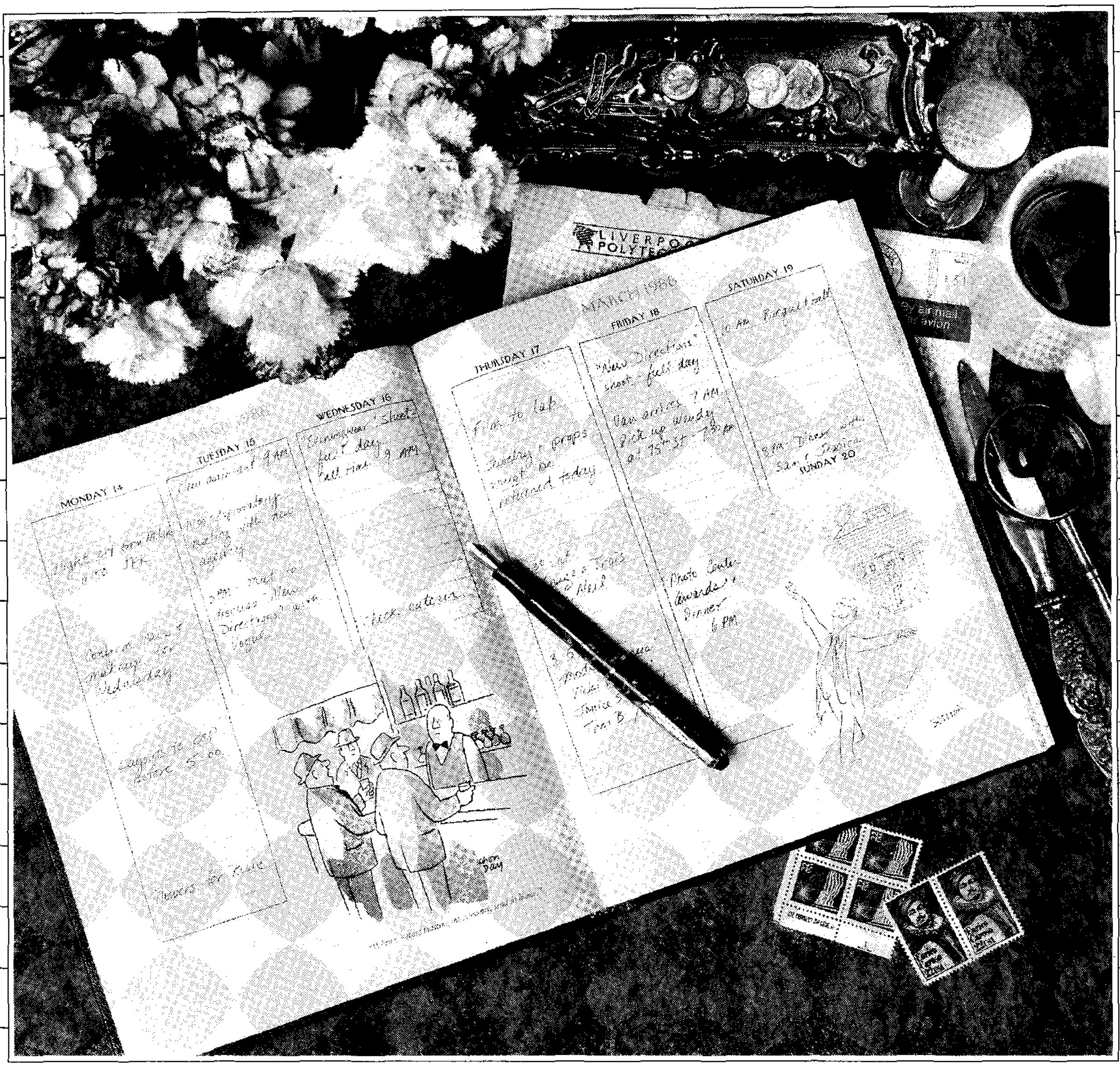
William Willis—Large reductivist oil paintings of simple shapes, with rich colors and textured surfaces. Through Nov. 18. (Esman, 70 Greene St. Open Wednesday evenings until 8.)

OTHER GALLERIES

Willem de Kooning—Paintings done between 1955 and 1963. Through Dec. 5. (Gagosian, 521 W. 23rd St., near Eleventh Ave.)

Grace Graupe-Pillard—A two-dimensional

START EACH DAY WITH A SMILE.



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mural of figures that were cut out of canvas. Through Nov. 29. (Bromm, 170 Avenue A, at 11th St. Opens at 1 Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Joel Otterson—Sculptures, including a large table the artist built from parts of other tables. Through Nov. 29. (Nature Morte, 204 E. 10th St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Michael Tracy—A twenty-year survey of paintings, sculptures, and works on paper. Through Dec. 20. (P.S. 1, at 46-01 21st St., Long Island City. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

The Arts at Black Mountain College—Part of the history of this experimental North Carolina college, a magnet for artists and scholars between 1933 and 1957 (the year it closed), is recorded with paintings, sculptures, music scores, textiles, memorabilia, and other material by Josef and Anni Albers, Harry Callahan, John Cage, Robert Rauschenberg, Ruth Asawa, Arthur Penn, and others. Through Dec. 19. (Grey Art Gallery, New York University, 33 Washington Pl. Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 to 6:30; Wednesdays, 10 to 8:30; Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays, 1 to 5.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Eve Arnold—Photographs of Marilyn Monroe taken between 1952 and 1962. Through Thursday, Nov. 12. (Castelli Graphics, 4 E. 77th St.)

Harry Callahan—Photographs. Through Nov. 28. (Pace-MacGill, 11 E. 57th St.)

Henri Cartier-Bresson—The Museum of Modern Art has mounted a show of his early prints. See below, under "Museums," for dates and times.

Charles Harbutt—A retrospective of works by a photojournalist. Through Nov. 28. (Witkin, 415 West Broadway. Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

August Sander (1876-1964)—Photographs from the twenties and thirties. Through Saturday, Nov. 14. (Sander, 51 Greene St.) . . . ¶ Ten prints by Sander, of a group of artists known as the Cologne Progressives, are at the Rachel Adler Gallery, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.

Ralph Steiner (1899-1986)—A retrospective of his lesser-known photographs. Through Dec. 19. (Prakapas, 19 E. 71st St. Opens at noon.)

Clarence H. White (1871-1925)—Photographs and photogravures. Through Nov. 28. (Photofind, 138 Spring St.)

Wallace Wilson / Robert R. Rodeck—Mural-size black-and-white prints. / Acrylic-emulsion prints, hand-colored with pastels, of path markers in the state of Quintana Roo, Mexico. Through Nov. 19. (Pfeifer, 568 Broadway.)

International Center of Photography—A hundred and fifty prints selected from entries in the World Press Photo Holland competition over the past thirty years. Through Nov. 15. (1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—A show of more than two hundred objects from the court of Sultan Süleyman I, who, during his forty-six-year reign over the Ottoman Empire, ruled as vigorously over his imperial studios (wooden Koran boxes, painted tiles, embroidered costumes, illuminated manuscripts) as he did over his spectacularly outfitted soldiers (jewel-encrusted helmets and swords, embroidered leather boots). Through Jan. 17. . . . ¶ Eighty or so paintings by members of the Hudson River School, among them Thomas Cole, Albert Bierstadt, and John F. Kensett. Through Jan. 3. . . . ¶ A retrospective of approximately seventy works by the seventeenth-century Spanish painter Francisco de Zurbarán, including "The Virgin of Las Cuevas" and "St. Hugo of Grenoble Visiting the Refectory." Through Dec. 13. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Tuesday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—A full complement of Frank Stella's painted metal wall reliefs, plus a few of the works that led up to them. Through Jan. 5. . . . ¶ The career of the sound-and-video artist Bill Viola is surveyed in a show that includes three installations. Through Jan. 3. . . . **Photography:** Prints from the thirties by Henri Cartier-Bresson. Through Nov. 29. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The museum will be closed to the public until Friday, Nov. 13.

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—A show of thirty-eight paintings and four sculptures by Julian Schnabel. Starts Friday, Nov. 6. . . . ¶ A retrospective of the paintings of Charles Demuth (1883-1935): Precisionist architectural scenes, studies of flowers and fruit, and portraits of vaudeville and theatrical figures. Through Jan. 17. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

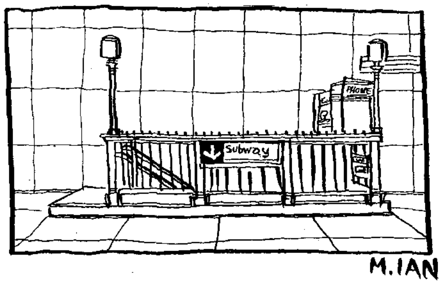
Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—A retrospective of paintings by the black social realist Jacob Lawrence, whose early work included narrative paintings about such figures as Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, and John Brown. Through Nov. 30. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 10 to 5.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—A show of ancient ivory carvings made by Bering Sea Eskimos, ranging from snow goggles and harpoon fittings to ceremonial figurines. . . . ¶ Paintings and models of dinosaurs as they have been envisioned by artists and paleontologists in the past hundred years or so. Both shows through Jan. 3. (Open daily. Hours: Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, 10 to 9; and Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5.)

American Craft Museum, 40 W. 53rd St.—A two-part exhibit of quilts, with works by winners of a 1987 national competition and historic quilts on loan from the Museum of American Folk Art. Through Jan. 10. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St.—The tradition of the Chinese artist-scholar is illustrated in a show (on loan from the Shanghai Museum) focussing on two Ming-dynasty artists. Paintings, calligraphy, and such paraphernalia as ceramics, jades, inkstones, and wrist rests, some seen in a furnished studio typical of the vocation. Through Jan. 3. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—The popularization of decoratively printed fabric is the subject of a display of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century textiles, original designs for them on paper, and such artifacts as copper printing plates and a salesman's sample card showing thirty-six different block- and roller-printed fabrics. (Open daily except Mondays and Veterans Day. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays, except Veterans Day, through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)



Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St.—In a display of bequests and loans, a predella panel of the Crucifixion by the quattrocento painter Piero della Francesca has been reunited with three other paintings, all originally part of an altarpiece in Borgo San Sepolcro, the artist's home town. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, except Veterans Day, 10 to 6; Sundays and Veterans Day, 1 to 6.)

Grolier Club, 47 E. 60th St.—"Marianne Moore: Vision Into Verse," a show from the personal literary archive of the writer which groups thirty-three of her poems with objects that inspired them—a toy crow alongside "To Victor Hugo of My Crow Pluto," for instance. Notebooks, working manuscripts, letters, books, and other materials on loan from the Rosenbach Museum and Library, of Philadelphia. Through Nov. 28. (Open daily, except Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—An extraordinary visual re-creation of the Dreyfus Affair, seen as a public event (courtroom sketches, newspapers, commercial products) and as a private one (Alfred Dreyfus's glasses and the notebooks he kept at Devil's Island, personal letters of support written to Émile Zola by Claude Monet, a photograph of Zola by Nadar). Through Jan. 14. (Open daily except Fridays and Saturdays. Hours: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, noon to 5; Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—A show of drawings by Raphael, among them a study for an apostle in the great altarpiece "Transfiguration," and drawings by artists who were his studio assistants. Through Jan. 3. . . . ¶ Fifty or so first editions and manuscripts, including Sir Philip Sidney's "Arcadia" and Herman Melville's letter to Nathaniel Hawthorne's wife in which he denies the presence of any symbolism in "Moby Dick." From the collection of Jacqueline and Henry Bradley Martin. Through Feb. 21. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—A show of works by the late-nineteenth-century artist Jasper F. Cropsey which includes the American landscapes he was best known for, and architectural drawings. Through Feb. 14. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—An exhibit that surveys the age of English Romanticism with paintings, drawings, original manuscripts, illuminated books, and memorabilia. An autograph copy of William Wordsworth's poem "Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey," J. M. W. Turner's painting "Interior of Tintern Abbey," Mary Shelley's annotated manuscript for "Frankenstein," and Wordsworth's inkstand are included. Through Jan. 2. (Open daily, except Sundays and Veterans Day, 10 to 6.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—Two one-man shows. Emilio Cruz's recent symbolic paintings and drawings; new Abstract Expressionist paintings by Bill Hutson. Through Jan. 3. (Open daily except Mondays and Tuesdays. Hours: Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

ART AFTER DARK

(Performance, music, dance, video, film, and combinations thereof.)

Franklin Furnace, 112 Franklin St. 925-4671—Marty Pottenger (performance), Friday and Saturday, Nov. 13-14, at 8:30.

The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793—Robbie McCauley (performance), Wednesday through Saturday, Nov. 4-7, at 8:30. . . . ¶ Michele Anne De Mey (dance), Thursday and Friday, Nov. 12-13, at 8:30. . . . ¶ Belgium's Wissel Theatre presenting "Où Est la Bête?" Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 14-15, at 8:30.

P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288—Frank Conversano (dance), Friday through Sunday, Nov. 6-8, at 9. . . . ¶ Danny Mydlack (performance), Friday through Sunday, Nov. 13-15, at 9. . . . ¶ Kaylynn Sullivan and Rebecca Perrin (performance), Fridays at 10 and Saturdays and Sundays at 8. Through Nov. 29.

MUSIC

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Alice Tully Hall 362-1911; for Carnegie Hall 247-7800; for Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St., 570-3949; for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719; and for the 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St., 427-4410. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

OPERA

METROPOLITAN OPERA—Wednesday, Nov. 4, at 8: "Tosca," with Eva Marton, Vladimir Popov, and Sherrill Milnes; conducted by Christian Badea. . . . ¶ Thursday, Nov. 5, at 7: "Die Walküre," with Jeannine Altmeyer, Sabine Hass, Timothy Jenkins, and Hans Sotin; James Levine. . . . ¶ Friday, Nov. 6, at 8: "Manon," with Carol Vaness, Alfredo Kraus, Gino Quilico, and David Hamilton; Manuel Rosenthal. . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 7, at 1:30: "La Bohème," with Roberta Alexander, Barbara Daniels, Bruno Beccaria, and Brian Schexnayder; Julius Rudel. . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 7, at 8: "Tosca," with Eva Marton, Vladimir Popov, Sherrill Milnes, and Italo Tajo; Christian Badea. . . . ¶ Monday, Nov. 9, at 8: "Manon," with Carol Vaness, Alfredo Kraus, Gino Quilico, and David Hamilton; Manuel Rosenthal. . . . ¶ Tuesday, Nov. 10, at 8: "La Bohème," with Roberta Alexander, Barbara Daniels, Bruno Beccaria, and Brian Schexnayder; Julius Rudel. . . . ¶ Wednesday, Nov. 11, at 7: "Die Walküre," with Jeannine Altmeyer, Sabine Hass, Timothy Jenkins, and Hans Sotin; Max Epstein. . . . ¶ Thursday, Nov. 12, at 7: A new production of "Il Trovatore," with Joan Sutherland, Livia Budai, Luciano Pavarotti, and Leo Nucci; Richard Bonynge. (A benefit performance.) . . . ¶ Friday, Nov. 13, at 8: "La Bohème" (a nonsubscription performance), with Roberta Alexander, Barbara Daniels, Neil Shicoff, and Pablo Elvira; Julius Rudel. . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 14, at 1: "Tosca," with Eva Marton, Vladimir Popov, and Sherrill Milnes; Christian Badea. . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 14, at 7: "Die Walküre," with Jeannine Altmeyer, Sabine Hass, Timothy Jenkins, and Hans Sotin; Max Epstein.

NEW YORK CITY OPERA—Final performances of the season. Thursday and Friday, Nov. 5-6, at 8; Saturday, Nov. 7, at 2 and 8; Sunday, Nov. 8, at 1 and 7; and Tuesday and Wednesday, Nov. 10-11, at 8: "The Student Prince," with alternating casts; all performances conducted by Jim Coleman. . . . ¶ Thursday and Friday, Nov. 12-13, at 8; Saturday, Nov. 14, at 2 and 8; and Sunday, Nov. 15, at 1 and 7: Two new productions. "L'Oca del Cairo," with Gail Dobish, Claudette Peterson, Mark Beudert, and Robert Orth; and "Where the Wild Things Are," with Karen Beardsley. Hal France conducting both. (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

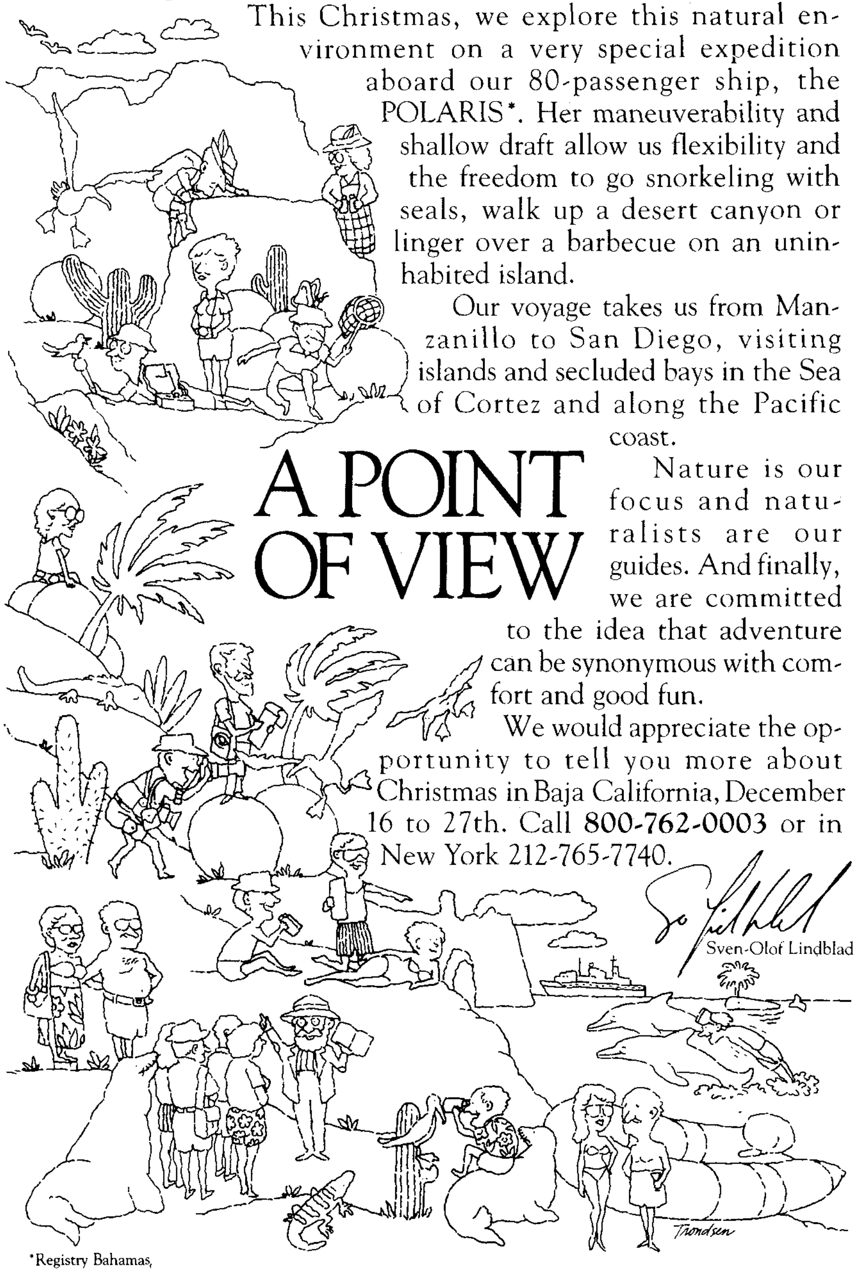
AMATO OPERA COMPANY—Presenting "La Traviata." (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. Saturday, Nov. 7, at 7:30, and Sunday, Nov. 8, at 2:30.)

BEL CANTO OPERA—Mara Waldman conducting the first New York performance in thirty years of Ildebrando Pizzetti's "Assassinio nella Catedrale" (in English), an opera based on T. S. Eliot's play. Staged by James Poulliott. (St. Bartholomew's Church, Park Ave. at 51st St. Saturday, Nov. 7, at 8:30, and Sunday, Nov. 8, at 3. For information about tickets, call 279-4200.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC—Wednesday, Nov. 4, at 8: Erich Leinsdorf conducting an all-Beethoven benefit concert, with Nathan Milstein, violin. . . . ¶ Thursday through Saturday, Nov. 5-7, and Tuesday, Nov. 10, at 8: Erich Leinsdorf conducting a Britten-Walton-Debussy program, with Lorne Munroe, cello. . . . ¶ Thursday, Nov. 12, at 8; Friday, Nov. 13, at 2; Saturday, Nov. 14, at 8; and Tuesday, Nov. 17, at 7:30: Kent Nagano conducting a program of music by George Benjamin, Chopin, and Bartók, with Bella Davidovich, piano. (Avery Fisher Hall. 874-2424.)

LONDON PHILHARMONIC—Semyon Bychkov con-



SPECIAL EXPEDITIONS AND THE SEA

CHRISTMAS IN BAJA CALIFORNIA

There are corners of the world that have enjoyed a centuries-old immunity to the encroachments of man.

One of these is Mexico's Baja California, a rugged peninsula whose mountain-rimmed coastline harbors countless whales and species of animal and plant life found nowhere else.

This Christmas, we explore this natural environment on a very special expedition aboard our 80-passenger ship, the POLARIS*. Her maneuverability and shallow draft allow us flexibility and the freedom to go snorkeling with seals, walk up a desert canyon or linger over a barbecue on an uninhabited island.

Our voyage takes us from Manzanillo to San Diego, visiting islands and secluded bays in the Sea of Cortez and along the Pacific coast.

A POINT OF VIEW

Nature is our focus and naturalists are our guides. And finally, we are committed to the idea that adventure can be synonymous with comfort and good fun.

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ducting a Mendelssohn-Mahler program. (Carnegie Hall. Tuesday, Nov. 10, at 8.)

Solisti New York—Ransom Wilson conducting an all-Mozart program. (Alice Tully Hall. Thursday, Nov. 5, at 8.)

Manhattan Symphony Orchestra—John Nelson conducting Mahler's "Resurrection" Symphony. With the Riverside Choral Society and other choral groups. (The Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. at 120th St. Sunday, Nov. 8, at 4. Tickets at the door on the day of the concert.)

Mozart Festival Orchestra—Baird Hastings conducting a program of music by others as well as by Mozart. With Robert Klapper, clarinet. (First Presbyterian Church, Fifth Ave. at 12th St. Sunday, Nov. 8, at 4:30. No tickets necessary.)

Jupiter Symphony—Jens Nygaard conducting. (Alice Tully Hall. Monday, Nov. 9, at 8.)

Mannes Orchestra—Yakov Kreizberg conducting a Mozart-Schubert-Tchaikovsky program. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. Thursday, Nov. 12, at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Orpheus—The first concert in a three-part chamber-music series. With Valery Afanassiev, piano. (Carnegie Hall. Saturday, Nov. 14, at 8.)

St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble—In a Hindemith-Mozart-Gassmann program. (Washington Irving High School, Irving Pl. at 16th St. Saturday, Nov. 14, at 8. For information about tickets, call 586-4680.)

New York Chamber Symphony—Gerard Schwarz conducting a program of music that includes the première of George Perle's cello concerto, with André Emelianoff as soloist. Alicia de Larrocha, piano, will accompany the orchestra in Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 25 in C Major. (92nd Street Y. Saturday, Nov. 14, at 8, and Sunday, Nov. 15, at 3.)

Sine Nomine Singers and Baroque Ensemble—Harry Saltzman directing an all-Monteverdi program. (Merkin Concert Hall. Saturday, Nov. 7, at 8.)

Florilegium Chamber Choir and Orchestra—JoAnn Rice directing a program of early music, in which all the pieces have the Song of Solomon as their text. (German Church, 313 W. 22nd St. Sunday, Nov. 8, at 5. Tickets at the door on the day of the concert.)

Beethoven Society—The New England Conservatory Orchestra and Chorus in an all-Beethoven program. Pascal Verrot will conduct the orchestra, and Lorna Cooke deVaron will direct the chorus. With Russell Sherman, piano. (Alice Tully Hall. Saturday, Nov. 14, at 3.)

Benefit Concerts—At Carnegie Hall. Sunday, Nov. 8, at 2:30: Joseph Silverstein conducting the National Guild Youth Symphony, with performers Leonard Pennario, piano; Wynton Marsalis, trumpet; and the Boys Choir of Harlem. . . . ¶ Sunday, Nov. 8, at 8: Leonard Bernstein and James Levine conducting a large ensemble composed of musicians from New York orchestras in the "Music for Life" concert. With Marilyn Horne, Leontyne Price, Luciano Pavarotti, Samuel Ramey, Yo-Yo Ma, Murray Perahia, and others.

RECITALS

Pierre Amoyal—Violin, with Shigeo Neriki, piano, in a program of three sonatas. (92nd Street Y. Wednesday, Nov. 4, at 8.)

Elly Ameling—Soprano, with Rudolf Jansen, piano. (Carnegie Hall. Thursday, Nov. 5, at 8.)

Music from Marlboro—Chamber music. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum. Thursday, Nov. 5, at 8.)

Louis Lortie—Piano, playing works by Ravel and Chopin. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum. Friday, Nov. 6, at 8.)

Michael Newman and Laura Oltman—Classical guitarists. (Mannes College of Music, 150 W. 85th St. Friday, Nov. 6, at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center—With Dawn Upshaw, soprano. (Alice Tully Hall. Friday, Nov. 6, at 8; Saturday, Nov. 7, at 3; and Sunday, Nov. 8, at 5.)

Murray Perahia—Piano, in an all-Beethoven program. With assisting artists. (92nd Street Y. Saturday, Nov. 7, at 8.)

Sharon Robinson—Cello. (Washington Irving High School, Irving Pl. at 16th St. Saturday, Nov. 7, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

David Starobin—Guitar, with members of Speculum Musicae. (92nd Street Y. Sunday, Nov. 8, at 3.)

North/South Consonance—Performing a program that celebrates the fiftieth anniversary of the American Composers' Alliance. With assisting artists. (Christ and St. Stephen's Church, 120 W. 69th St. Sunday, Nov. 8, at 3. Tickets at the door on the day of the concert.)

An die Musik—Chamber music. (Merkin Concert Hall. Sunday, Nov. 8, at 4.)

Christina Kiss—Piano, in an all-Chopin concert. (Alice Tully Hall. Sunday, Nov. 8, at 8.)

Julius Baker—Flute, with assisting artists. (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. Sunday, Nov. 8, at 8. For information about tickets, call 874-7515.)

New York Philomusica—Playing music by Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and John Harbison. (Merkin Concert Hall. Monday, Nov. 9, at 8.)

Judith Pearce and Elizabeth DiFelice—Flute and piano. With Donald Palma, double bass. (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. Monday, Nov. 9, at 8.)

Artur Balsam—Piano. (Borden Auditorium, Manhattan School of Music, Broadway at 122nd St. Monday, Nov. 9, at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Anton Nel—Piano, in, among other works, the première of David Del Tredici's "Virtuoso Alice." (Alice Tully Hall. Tuesday, Nov. 10, at 8.)

Benny Kim—Violin. (92nd Street Y. Tuesday, Nov. 10, at 8.)

Vladimir Feltsman—Piano, in his first solo concert in New York. (Carnegie Hall. Wednesday, Nov. 11, at 8.)

Ludwig Olshansky—Piano, in a Copland, Beethoven, Chopin program. (Merkin Concert Hall. Wednesday, Nov. 11, at 8.)

Martin Best Medieval Ensemble—Playing the music of Guiraut Riquier and his contemporaries. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum. Thursday, Nov. 12, at 8.)

Paul Meyer—Clarinet. (Merkin Concert Hall. Thursday, Nov. 12, at 8.)

Waverly Consort—A program devoted to the music of Jean-Baptiste Lully, court musician to Louis XIV, and his contemporaries. With seven guest artists. (Alice Tully Hall. Thursday, Nov. 12, and Saturday, Nov. 14, at 8.)

Mendelssohn String Quartet—With Ursula Oppens, piano. (Merkin Concert Hall. Saturday, Nov. 14, at 8.)

SPORTS

(The ticket-information number for Madison Square Garden is 563-8300, for the Meadowlands 1-201 935-3900, and for Nassau Coliseum 1-516 587-9222.)

Basketball—At **byrne meadowlands arena:** Nets vs. Cleveland Cavaliers, Friday, Nov. 6, at 7:30. . . . ¶ Nets vs. Chicago Bulls, Wednesday, Nov. 11, at 7:30. . . . **madison square garden:** Knicks vs. Boston Celtics, Monday, Nov. 9, at 7:30. . . . ¶ Knicks vs. Atlanta Hawks, Wednesday, Nov. 11, at 7:30. . . . ¶ Knicks vs. Milwaukee Bucks, Saturday, Nov. 14, at 7:30.

Biathlon—The second National Biathlon Championship (running and biking) will take place in Central Park on Sunday, Nov. 8, at 8. Participants will start the twenty-four-mile event at the Loeb Boathouse parking lot, circle the inner roadway three times, and finish back at the boathouse.

Football—At Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands—Giants vs. New England Patriots, Sunday, Nov. 8, at 8. . . . ¶ Jets vs. Seattle Seahawks, Monday, Nov. 9, at 9.

Hockey—At **byrne meadowlands arena:** Devils vs. St. Louis Blues, Thursday, Nov. 5, at 7:45. . . . ¶ Devils vs. Washington Capitals, Saturday, Nov. 7, at 7:45. . . . ¶ Devils vs. Winnipeg Jets, Thursday, Nov. 12, at 7:45. . . . ¶ Devils vs. Detroit Red Wings, Saturday, Nov. 14, at 1:35. . . . **nassau coliseum:** Islanders vs. Pittsburgh Penguins, Thursday, Nov. 5, at 8:05. . . . ¶ Islanders vs. Detroit Red Wings, Saturday, Nov. 7, at 7:05. . . . ¶ Islanders vs. Washington Capitals, Tuesday, Nov. 10, at 8:05. . . . ¶ Islanders vs. Winnipeg Jets, Saturday, Nov. 14, at 7:05. . . . **madison square garden:** Rangers vs. Devils, Tuesday, Nov. 10, at 7:35.

Horse Show—National Horse Show. (Madison Square Garden. *Through Sunday, Nov. 8.* Competitions daily at 1:30 and 7:30, except Thursday, Nov. 5, at 1 and 7:30.)

Racing—At **aqueduct:** Daily, except Tuesdays and Wednesday, Nov. 4, at 12:30. The Remsen and the Demoiselle, Saturday, Nov. 7. . . . **meadowlands:** Weeknights, except Monday, Nov. 9, at 7:30; through Saturday, Dec. 12.

Squash Racquets—Rolex United States Open. Quarter-finals Wednesday, Nov. 11, at noon and 5:30; semifinals Thursday, Nov. 12, at 5:30; finals Friday, Nov. 13, at 5:30. (The Palladium, 126 E. 14th St. Tickets at the door on the days of the matches.)

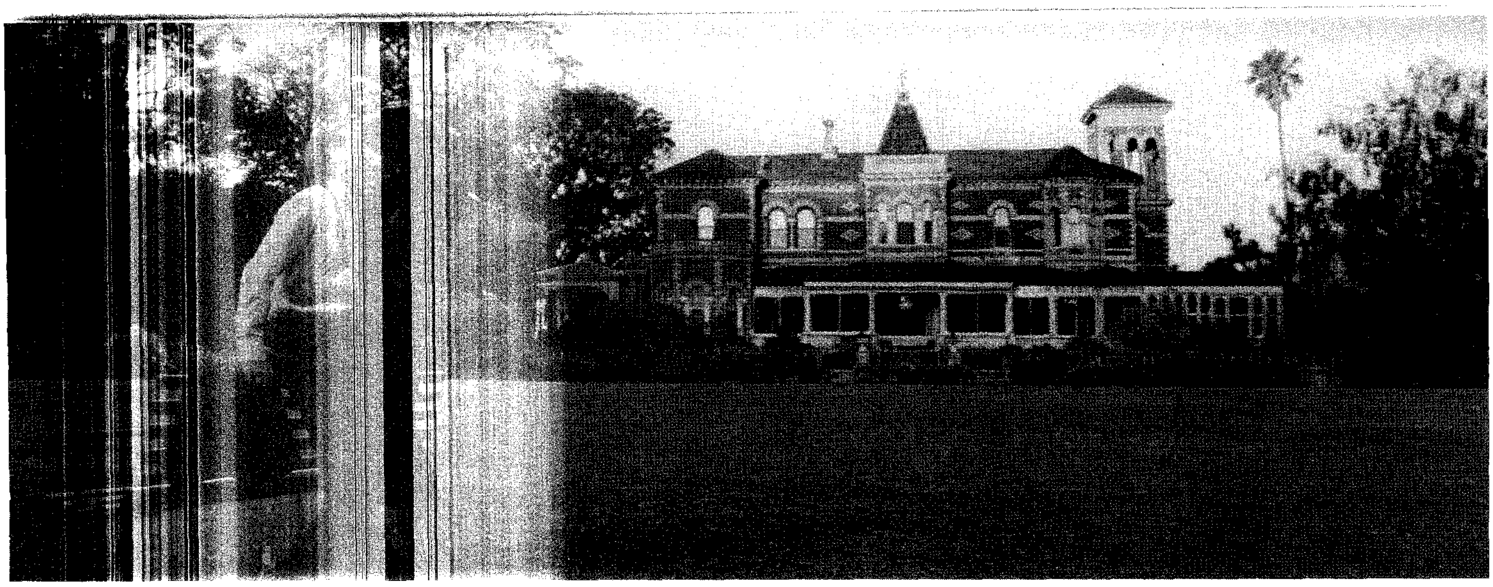
ET ALIA

Poetry and Prose Readings—Toni Morrison, Larry Heinemann, Alice McDermott, and Howard Norman reading from their own novels, which have been nominated for a National Book Award. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. Monday, Nov. 9, at 5:30. For information about tickets, call 645-5848.) . . . ¶ Mona Van Duyn and Herbert Morris reading from their own poetry. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410. Monday, Nov. 9, at 8.) . . . ¶ Robert Creeley reading from his own poetry. (Dia Art Foundation, 155 Mercer St. Thursday, Nov. 12, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.)

Lectures—At the **pen american center:** William Gass, Elizabeth Hardwick, and Susan Sontag talking about Henry James. (568 Broadway. Sunday, Nov. 8, at 7. Tickets at the door on the evening of the lecture.) . . . **new york public library:** Philip Glass speaking about his music. (Thursday, Nov. 5, at 6.) . . . ¶ "The Limits of Free Speech: Are There Any?" is the topic of a talk by Nat Hentoff. (Celeste Bartos Forum, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. Tuesday, Nov. 10, at 6. For information about tickets to either event, call 930-0855.)

Walking Tour—A conducted tour of upper Fifth Avenue sponsored by the New-York Historical Society. Sunday, Nov. 8, starting in front of the Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St., at 2. (For information about tickets, call 873-0125.)

Flower Show—Thousands of varieties of Japanese chrysanthemums are on display in the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory at the New York Botanical Garden. (Bronx Park. Daily, except Mondays, 10 to 4; through Sunday, Nov. 15.)



“Never [illegible] to [illegible] expensive [illegible] my Mother always said. “Unless you really like him.”

She told me a lot of things about men, my Mother. And she was almost always right.

But this man was no typical man. This was a man in a million. A man who seemed very fond of me.

It had started only six weeks ago when I was stuck in row 12 on one of those seemingly endless flights that stop in Guam on their way to Tokyo.

In seat 12F, alongside of me, was an elbow that seemed intent on straying across the armrest the entire flight. It was his elbow.

By the time they served lunch I was halfway to falling in love.

Over the next two weeks I saw him just about every day. So when he asked me to join him for a trip out of town, it wasn't really a surprise.

After a long and leisurely lunch at a remote Country Inn, my man took me for a walk into the garden.

“This is for you, and for our days to come,” he whispered in my ear as he handed me a package about half the size of a shoe box.

I undid the wrapping paper and revealed a beautiful calfskin jewelry box. With bated breath I lifted the lid.

And there it was, the diamonds glistening in the late afternoon country light, the most exquisite watch you've ever seen.

The name on the textured face identified it as a Concord Saratoga.™

“There are twenty-four diamonds locked snugly into that polished eighteen-carat gold bezel,” he informed me with a smile, “one for every year of your life.”

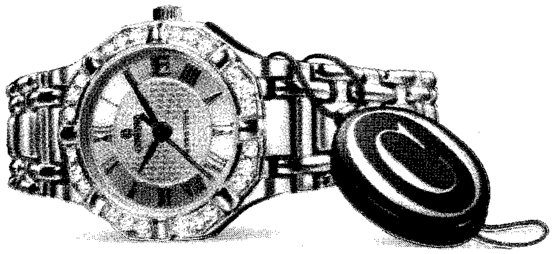
The curve of the linkages on the bracelet matched my wrist as though it was designed just for me. And it felt solid and substantial.

This was a watch for a lifetime.

Admiring the way the raised gold numerals seemed to shimmer in the reflected sparkle of the diamonds, I suddenly recalled my Mother's advice.

“There must be strings attached to a gift as beautiful as this?” I asked my man, perhaps a little hopefully.

He let go of me and knelt down on one knee, “I was rather hoping it would help get you to the church on time.”



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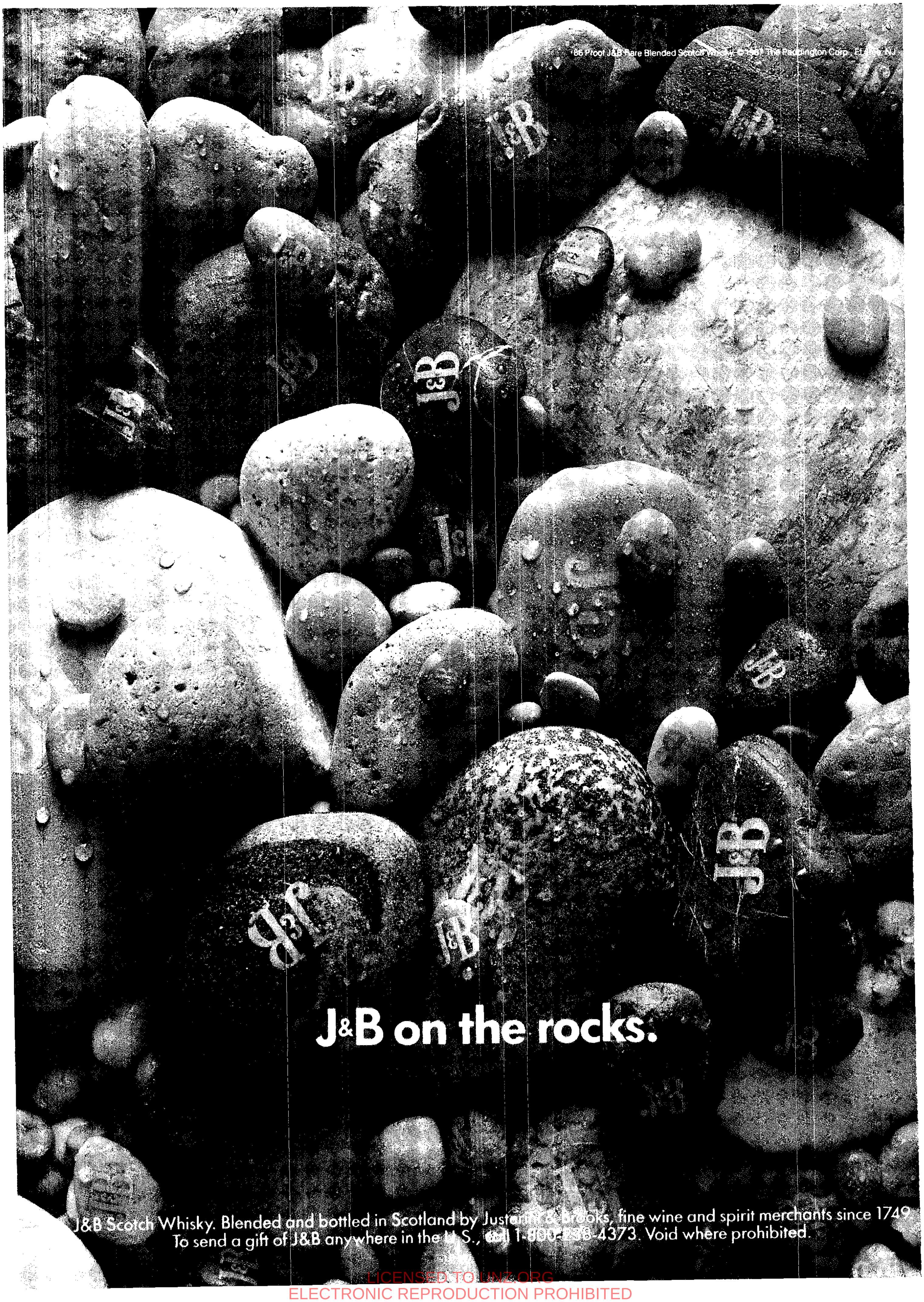
The Volkswagen way.**



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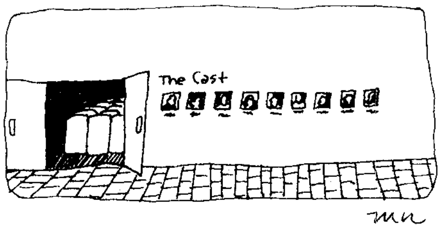
GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES



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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 30.

EAST SIDE

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171; theatre opens in the late afternoon and is closed Mondays.)
Nov. 4: (Separate admissions) "Hell in the Pacific" (1969; directed by John Boorman), with Lee Marvin and Toshiro Mifune; and "Written on the Wind" (1957; Douglas Sirk), with Rock Hudson, Lauren Bacall, Robert Stack, and Dorothy Malone.
Nov. 5-8: (Separate admissions) "Exorcist II: The Heretic" (1977; John Boorman), with Linda Blair, Richard Burton, Louise Fletcher, and Max von Sydow; and "Written on the Wind."
Nov. 10-11: At 5:30, "All Nudity Shall Be Punished" (1973; Arnaldo Jabor; a Brazilian film, in Portuguese); at 7:30, "Why Does Herr R. Run Amok?" (1970; Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German), with Kurt Raab, Lilith Ungerer, and Hanna Schygulla; and, at 9:15, "Cousin Angelica" (1974; Carlos Saura; in Spanish), with José Luis López Vázquez and María Clara Fernández.
Nov. 12: At 6:15, "Céleste" (1981; Percy Adlon; in German), with Eva Mattes and Jurgen Arndt; and, at 8:30, "Céline and Julie Go Boating" (1974; Jacques Rivette; in French), with Juliet Berto and Dominique Labourier.
From Nov. 13: At 5:45, "The Lovers" (1959; Louis Malle; in French), with Jeanne Moreau; at 7:30, "Katzelmacher" (1969; Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German), with Hanna Schygulla, Harry Baer, and Fassbinder himself; and, at 9:15, "An Actor's Revenge" (1963; Kon Ichikawa; in Japanese).

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Suspect" (Peter Yates), with Cher and Dennis Quaid.
Theatre 2: "The Hidden" (Jack Sholder), with Michael Nouri and Kyle MacLachlan.
Theatre 3: Through Nov. 5: "Weeds" (†). From Nov. 6: "Less Than Zero" (Marek Kanievska), with Andrew McCarthy, Jami Gertz, and Robert Downey, Jr.

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"The Princess Bride" (†).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
Through Nov. 5: "The Sicilian" (Michael Cimino), with Christopher Lambert.
From Nov. 6: "Hello Again" (Frank Perry), with Shelley Long, Judith Ivey, Gabriel Byrne, and Corbin Bernsen.

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Baby Boom" (†).
Theatre 2: "Fatal Attraction" (†).
Theatre 3: "Fatal Beauty" (Tom Holland), with Whoopi Goldberg, Sam Elliott, and Rubén Blades.

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
Through Nov. 5: "Someone to Watch Over Me" (†).
From Nov. 6: To be announced.

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
Through Nov. 5: "Dirty Dancing" (†).
From Nov. 6: "Fire and Ice" (Willy Bogner), with Suzy Chaffee and John Eaves.

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Through Nov. 5: "The Hidden" (Jack Sholder), with Michael Nouri and Kyle MacLachlan.
From Nov. 6: "Hello Again" (Frank Perry), with Shelley Long, Judith Ivey, Gabriel Byrne, and Corbin Bernsen.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"The Sicilian" (Michael Cimino), with Christopher Lambert.

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
Through Nov. 5: "Dancers" (Herbert Ross), with Mikhail Baryshnikov.
From Nov. 6: "Manon of the Spring" (†).

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 5: "Someone to Watch Over Me" (†). From Nov. 6: "Russkies" (Rick Rosenthal), with Whip Hubley, Leaf Phoenix, and Peter Billingsley.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 5: "Prince of Darkness" (John Carpenter), with Donald Pleasence and Jameson Parker. From Nov. 6: "Made in Heaven" (Alan Rudolph), with Timothy Hutton and Kelly McGillis.

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Hope and Glory" (†).
Theatre 2: "Barfly" (†).

D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 50th. (759-4630)
"House of Games" (David Mamet), with Lindsay Crouse and Joe Mantegna.

Cinema I and II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022/0774)
Theatre 1: "Dark Eyes" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Whales of August" (†).

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 5: "Weeds" (†). From Nov. 6: "Less Than Zero" (Marek Kanievska), with Andrew McCarthy, Jami Gertz, and Robert Downey, Jr.
Theatre 2: "Suspect" (Peter Yates), with Cher and Dennis Quaid.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"The Princess Bride" (†).

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 5: "No Man's Land" (Peter Werner), with Charlie Sheen and D. B. Sweeney. From Nov. 6: "Cry Freedom" (Richard Attenborough), with Kevin Kline, Penelope Wilton, and Denzel Washington.
Theatre 2: "Baby Boom" (†).

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"Anna" (Yurek Bogayevicz), with Sally Kirkland, Paulina Porizkova, and Robert Fields.

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Fatal Attraction" (†).

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
Through Nov. 5: "Like Father Like Son" (Rod Daniel), with Dudley Moore and Kirk Cameron.
From Nov. 6: "Dirty Dancing" (†).

Loews Orpheum I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: "Fatal Beauty" (Tom Holland), with Whoopi Goldberg, Sam Elliott, and Rubén Blades.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 5: "Prince of Darkness" (John Carpenter), with Donald Pleasence and Jameson Parker. From Nov. 6: "Hiding Out" (Bob Giraldi), with Jon Cryer.

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "The Hidden" (Jack Sholder), with Michael Nouri and Kyle MacLachlan.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 5: "The Sicilian" (Michael Cimino), with Christopher Lambert. From Nov. 6: "Less Than Zero" (Marek Kanievska), with Andrew McCarthy, Jami Gertz, and Robert Downey, Jr.

WEST SIDE

Film Forum I and 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Theatre 1: "Broken Noses" (directed by Bruce Weber), with Andy Minsker.
Theatre 2: See listings under "Revival Houses."

Bleecker St. Cinema I and 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 5: The 20th International Tournée of Animation. From Nov. 6: "Hail! Hail! Rock 'n' Roll" (Taylor Hackford), a documentary about Chuck Berry.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 5: "Vera" (Sérgio Toledo; a Brazilian film, in Portuguese). From Nov. 6: The 20th International Tournée of Animation.

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 5: "The Big Easy" (†). From Nov. 6: "Slamdance" (Wayne Wang), with Tom Hulce and Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio.
Theatre 2: "House of Games" (David Mamet), with Lindsay Crouse and Joe Mantegna.

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Through Nov. 5: "Dirty Dancing" (†).
From Nov. 6: "Hiding Out" (Bob Giraldi), with Jon Cryer.

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 5: "Dancers" (Herbert Ross), with Mikhail Baryshnikov. From Nov. 6: To be announced.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 5: "No Way Out" (1987 †). From Nov. 6: To be announced.

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "My Life as a Dog" (Lasse Hallström; in Swedish), with Anton Glanzelius.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 12: "I've Heard the Mermaids Singing" (Patricia Rozema). From Nov. 13 (tentative): "Hope and Glory" (†).
Theatre 3: "Matewan" (†).
Theatre 4: Through Nov. 5: "Wish You Were Here" (†). From Nov. 6: "Blind Trust" (Yves Simoneau).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 5: "Prince of Darkness" (John Carpenter), with Donald Pleasence and Jameson Parker. From Nov. 6: "Hello Again" (Frank Perry), with Shelley Long, Judith Ivey, Gabriel Byrne, and Corbin Bernsen.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 5: "Nowhere to Hide." From Nov. 6: "Russkies" (Rick Rosenthal), with Whip Hubley, Leaf Phoenix, and Peter Billingsley.
Theatre 3: Through Nov. 5: "Someone to Watch Over Me" (†). From Nov. 6: To be announced.

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"The Princess Bride" (†).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
Through Nov. 5: "Hail! Hail! Rock 'n' Roll" (Taylor Hackford), a documentary about Chuck Berry.
From Nov. 6: "Cry Freedom" (Richard Attenborough), with Kevin Kline, Penelope Wilton, and Denzel Washington.

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Gaby: A True Story" (Luis Mandoki), with Liv Ullmann, Norma Aleandro, and Robert Loggia.

New Carnegie, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
Through Nov. 5: "The Princess Bride" (†).
From Nov. 6: To be announced.

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
"The Glass Menagerie" (Paul Newman), with Joanne Woodward, Karen Allen, and John Malkovich.

Carnegie Screening Room, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (757-2131)
"Long Live the Lady" (†).

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"Maurice" (†).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
Through Nov. 5: "No Way Out" (1987 †).
From Nov. 6: To be announced.

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Fatal Attraction" (†).

Lincoln Plaza I, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Jean de Florette" (†).
Theatre 2: "My Life as a Dog" (Lasse Hall-

ström; in Swedish), with Anton Glanzelius. Theatre 3: "The Funeral" (†).

Cinema Studio 1 and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: "The Theme" (Gleb Panfilov; in Russian).
Theatre 2: "Sammy and Rosie Get Laid" (Stephen Frears).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"Barfly" (†).

Embassy 72nd St. 1 and 2, B'way at 72nd. (724-6745)
Theatre 1: "The Princess Bride" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 10: "No Man's Land" (Peter Werner), with Charlie Sheen and D. B. Sweeney. From Nov. 11: "Siesta" (Mary Lambert), with Ellen Barkin, Gabriel Byrne, and Julian Sands.

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 5: "Like Father Like Son" (Rod Daniel), with Dudley Moore and Kirk Cameron. From Nov. 6: "Hello Again" (Frank Perry), with Shelley Long, Judith Ivey, Gabriel Byrne, and Corbin Bernsen.
Theatre 2: "Suspect" (Peter Yates), with Cher and Dennis Quaid.
Theatre 3: "Baby Boom" (†).
Theatre 4: "The Hidden" (Jack Sholder), with Michael Nouri and Kyle MacLachlan.
Theatre 5: Through Nov. 5: "Weeds" (†). From Nov. 6: "Cry Freedom" (Richard Attenborough), with Kevin Kline, Penelope Wilton, and Denzel Washington.
Theatre 6: "House of Games" (David Mamet), with Lindsay Crouse and Joe Mantegna.

Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 5: "Someone to Watch Over Me" (†). From Nov. 6: "Russkies" (Rick Rosenthal), with Whip Hubley, Leaf Phoenix, and Peter Billingsley.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 5: "Matewan" (†). From Nov. 6: "Made in Heaven" (Alan Rudolph), with Timothy Hutton and Kelly McGillis.

Columbia Cinema, B'way at 103rd. (866-7500)
Through Nov. 5: "The Sicilian" (Michael Cimino), with Christopher Lambert.
From Nov. 6: "Slamdance" (Wayne Wang), with Tom Hulce and Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio.

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 5: Theatre closed. From Nov. 6: "Less Than Zero" (Marek Kanievska), with Andrew McCarthy, Jami Gertz, and Robert Downey, Jr.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 5: Theatre closed. From Nov. 6: "Hope and Glory" (†).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 5: "The Principal" (directed by Christopher Cain), with James Belushi, Louis Gossett, Jr., and Rae Dawn Chong. From Nov. 6: "Made in Heaven" (Alan Rudolph), with Timothy Hutton and Kelly McGillis.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 5: "Big Shots" (Robert Mandel). From Nov. 6: "Hiding Out" (Bob Giraldi), with Jon Cryer.
Theatre 3: "Like Father Like Son" (Rod Daniel), with Dudley Moore and Kirk Cameron.
Theatre 4: "Weeds" (†).
Theatre 5: "Suspect" (Peter Yates), with Cher and Dennis Quaid.
Theatre 6: Through Nov. 5: "Deranged" (Chuck Vincent). From Nov. 6: "Less Than Zero" (Marek Kanievska), with Andrew McCarthy, Jami Gertz, and Robert Downey, Jr.

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (757-2408)
Through Nov. 5: "The Hidden" (Jack Sholder), with Michael Nouri and Kyle MacLachlan.
From Nov. 6: "Hello Again" (Frank Perry), with Shelley Long, Judith Ivey, Gabriel Byrne, and Corbin Bernsen.

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, Seventh Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 5: "No Man's Land" (Peter Werner), with Charlie Sheen and D. B. Sweeney. Nov. 6-12: "The Hidden" (Jack Sholder), with Michael Nouri and Kyle MacLachlan. From Nov. 13: "The Running Man" (Paul Michael Glaser), with Arnold Schwarzenegger and Maria Conchita Alonso.
Theatre 3: Through Nov. 5: "No Way Out" (1987 †). Nov. 6-12: "The Hidden." From Nov. 13: "The Running Man."
Theatre 4: "Baby Boom" (†).

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
"Fatal Beauty" (Tom Holland), with Whoopi Goldberg, Sam Elliott, and Rubén Blades.

Movieland, B'way at 47th. (757-8320)
"Prince of Darkness" (John Carpenter), with Donald Pleasence and Jameson Parker.

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 5: "The Sicilian" (Michael Cimino), with Christopher Lambert. From Nov. 6: To be announced.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 5: "Nightflyers" (T. C. Blake), with Catherine Mary Stewart and Michael Praed. From Nov. 6: "Steel Dawn" (Lance Hool), with Patrick Swayze and Lisa Niemi.

Warner, 7th Ave. between 42nd and 43rd. (764-6760)
Through Nov. 5: "Someone to Watch Over Me" (†).
From Nov. 6: "Death Wish 4: The Crackdown" (J. Lee Thompson), with Charles Bronson.

REVIVAL HOUSES

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through Nov. 5: "Immoral Tales" (1976; directed by Walerian Borowczyk; in French); and "Servant and Mistress" (1978; Bruno Gantillon; in French), with Victor Lanoux and Andréa Ferréol.
Nov. 6-7: "Solaris" (1976; Andrei Tarkovsky; in Russian); and "La Jetée" (1963; Chris Marker; in French).
Nov. 8: "And the Ship Sails On" (1983; Federico Fellini; in Italian); and "Juliet of the Spirits" (1965; Federico Fellini; in Italian), with Giulietta Masina.
Nov. 9-10: "Peggy Sue Got Married" (1986; Francis Coppola), with Kathleen Turner and Nicolas Cage; and "Baby, It's You" (1983; John Sayles), with Rosanna Arquette and Vincent Spano.
Nov. 11-12: "Metropolis" (1926; Fritz Lang; a German silent film), with Brigitte Helm; and "M" (1932; Fritz Lang; in German), with Peter Lorre.
Nov. 13-14: "Amadeus" (1984; Miloš Forman), with F. Murray Abraham and Tom Hulce; and "Song of Summer" (1968; Ken Russell; a BBC television film), with Max Adrian and Christopher Gable.

Film Forum 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Nov. 4: "The Night of the Hunter" (1955; Charles Laughton), with Robert Mitchum, Shelley Winters, and Lillian Gish; and "Baby Doll" (1956; Elia Kazan), with Karl Malden, Carroll Baker, Eli Wallach, and Mildred Dunnock.
Nov. 5: "Touch of Evil" (1958; Orson Welles), with Welles, Charlton Heston, and Janet Leigh; and "The Lady from Shanghai" (1948; Orson Welles), with Rita Hayworth, Everett Sloane, and Welles.
Nov. 6: "Veronika Voss" (1982; Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German), with Rosel Zech; and "Lola" (1962; Jacques Demy; in French), with Anouk Aimée and Marc Michel.
Nov. 7-8: "Dr. Strangelove" (1964; Stanley Kubrick), with Peter Sellers, George C. Scott, and Sterling Hayden; "The Killing" (1956; Stanley Kubrick), with Sterling Hayden, Coleen Gray, Elisha Cook, Jr., and Marie Windsor; and "Killer's Kiss" (1955; Stanley Kubrick), with Frank Silvera.
Nov. 9: "The Wind" (1928; Victor Seastrom; a silent film), with Lillian Gish, Montagu

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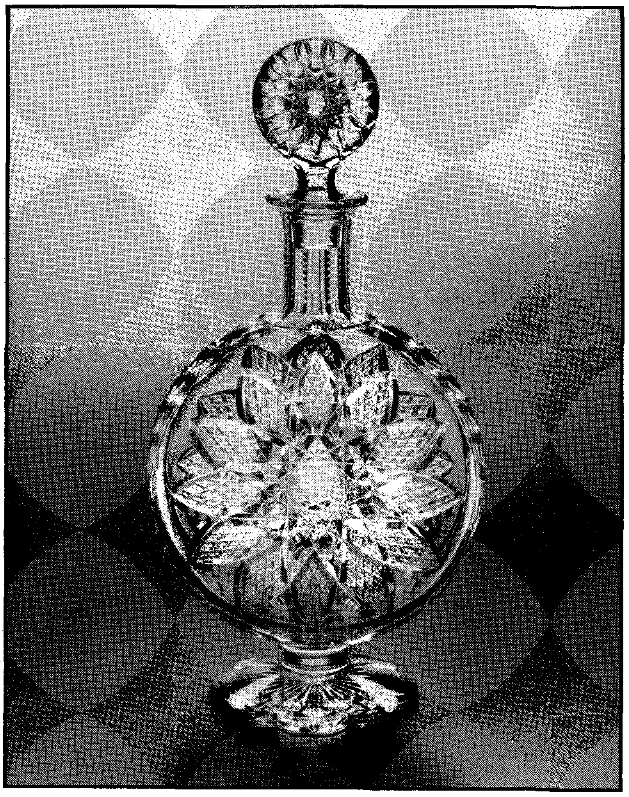
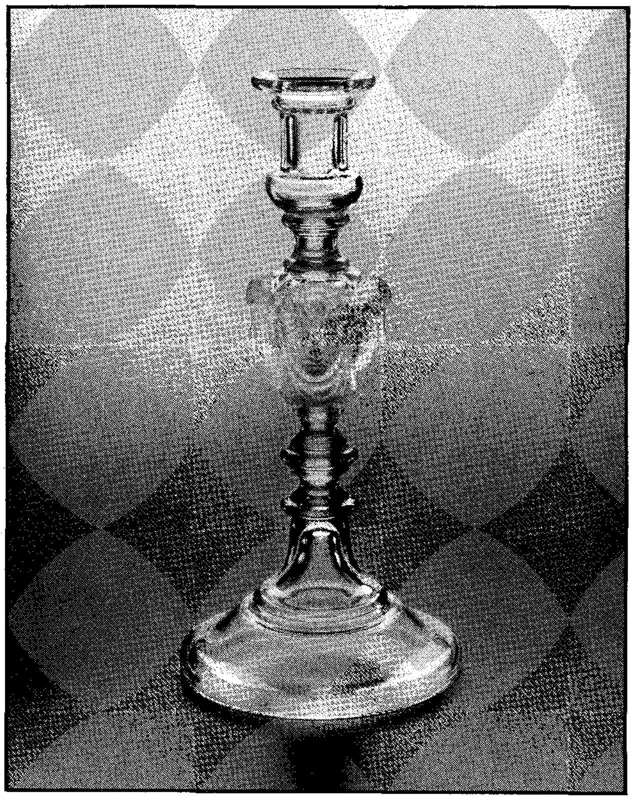


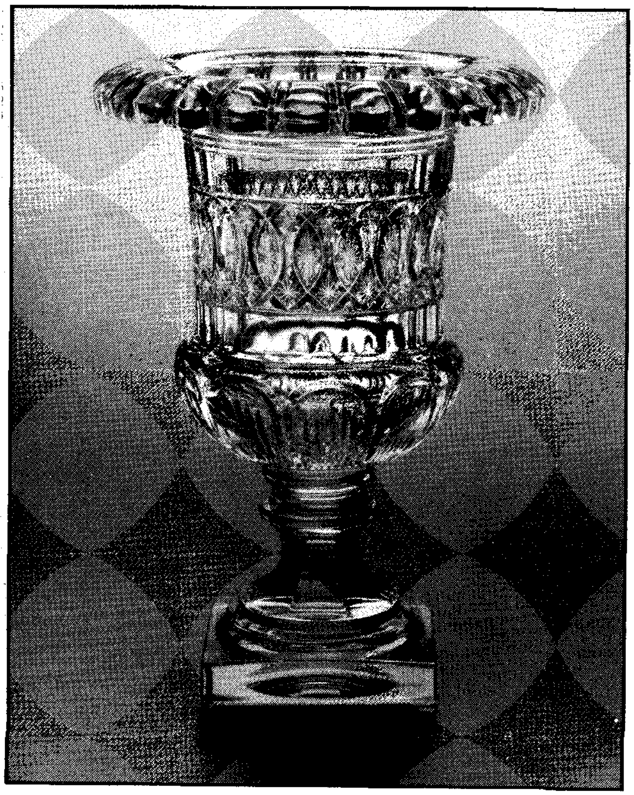
Rosette Carafe
Created in 1902
12⅞″ high; 6¾″ wide

Limited edition of 200



Cameo Candleholder
Created in 1867
11⅜″ high

Limited edition of 250



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Created in 1910
11¾″ high

Limited edition of 150

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Baccarat

Love, Lars Hanson, and Dorothy Cumming; and "He Who Gets Slapped" (1924; Victor Seastrom; a silent film), with Lon Chaney, Norma Shearer, and John Gilbert.

Nov. 10-11: "Sweet Smell of Success" (1957; Alexander Mackendrick), with Burt Lancaster, Tony Curtis, Susan Harrison, and Sam Levene; and "Raging Bull" (1980; Martin Scorsese), with Robert De Niro, Cathy Moriarty, and Joe Pesci.

Nov. 12: "The Postman Always Rings Twice" (1946; Tay Garnett), with Lana Turner, John Garfield, and Cecil Kellaway; and "Nightmare Alley" (1947; Edmund Goulding), with Tyrone Power, Joan Blondell, and Coleen Gray.

From Nov. 13: "Ossessione" (1942; Luchino Visconti; in Italian), with Clara Calamai and Massimo Girotti.

Thalia SoHo, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)

Nov. 4: "Key Largo" (1948; John Huston), with Humphrey Bogart, Edward G. Robinson, and Lauren Bacall; and "Prizzi's Honor" (1985; John Huston), with Jack Nicholson, Kathleen Turner, William Hickey, Anjelica Huston, and John Randolph.

Nov. 5: "Pickup" (1951; Hugo Haas), with Haas; and "Over-Exposed" (1956; Lewis Seiler), with Cleo Moore and Richard Crenna.

Nov. 6-7: "Five Easy Pieces" (1970; Bob Rafelson), with Jack Nicholson; and "Citizens Band" ("Handle with Care," 1977; Jonathan Demme), with Paul Le Mat.

Nov. 8: "Straight Through the Heart" (1983; Doris Dörrie; in German); and "The White Rose" (1983; Michael Verhoeven; in German), with Lena Stolze and Wulf Kessler.

Nov. 9: "The Go-Between" (1971; Joseph Losey), with Julie Christie, Alan Bates, Margaret Leighton, and Michael Redgrave; and "The Hireling" (1973; Alan Bridges), with Robert Shaw and Sarah Miles.

Nov. 10: "Never on Sunday" (1960; Jules Dassin; in English and Greek), with Melina *Mercouri and Dassin; and* "Zorba the Greek" (1964; Michael Cacoyannis), with Anthony Quinn, Alan Bates, Irene Papas, and Lila Kedrova.

Nov. 11: "Moby Dick" (1956; John Huston), with Gregory Peck, Richard Basehart, and Leo Genn; and "Moulin Rouge" (1953; John Huston), with José Ferrer, Colette Marchand, and Zsa Zsa Gabor.

Nov. 12: "American Hot Wax" (1978; Floyd Mutrux), with Tim McIntire; "Go, Johnny, Go!" (1959), with Alan Freed as host; and "Mr. Rock 'n' Roll" (1957), with Alan Freed.

Nov. 13-14: "Stavisky" (1974; Alain Resnais; in French), with Jean-Paul Belmondo and Charles Boyer; and "Providence" (1977; Alain Resnais), with Ellen Burstyn, Dirk Bogarde, John Gielgud, David Warner, and Elaine Stritch.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

Nov. 4: "Funny Face" (1957; Stanley Donen), with Audrey Hepburn, Fred Astaire, Kay Thompson, and Michel Auclair; and "Sabrina" (1954; Billy Wilder), with Humphrey Bogart, Audrey Hepburn, and William Holden.

Nov. 5: "Red Desert" (1965; Michelangelo Antonioni; in Italian), with Monica Vitti and Richard Harris; and "Blow-Up" (1966; Michelangelo Antonioni), with Vanessa Redgrave and David Hemmings.

Nov. 6-7: "The Trial" (1962; Orson Welles), with Anthony Perkins, Jeanne Moreau, Suzanne Flon, Elsa Martinelli, Romy Schneider, and Welles; and "The Third Man" (1950; Carol Reed), with Orson Welles, Joseph Cotten, Alida Valli, and Trevor Howard.

Nov. 8: "Suddenly, Last Summer" (1959; Joseph L. Mankiewicz), with Elizabeth Taylor, Montgomery Clift, and Katharine Hepburn; and "Holiday" (1938; George Cukor), with Katharine Hepburn, Cary Grant, Lew Ayres, Edward Everett Horton, and Doris Nolan.

Nov. 9: "The Men Who Tread on the Tiger's Tail" (1945; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese); and "The Drunken Angel" (1948; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese).

Nov. 10: "The Painted Veil" (1934; Richard Boleslavsky), with Greta Garbo, Herbert Marshall, and George Brent; and "Mata Hari" (1932; George Fitzmaurice), with Greta Garbo, Ramon Novarro, and Lionel Barrymore.

Nov. 11: "This Gun for Hire" (1942; Frank Tuttle), with Veronica Lake, Alan Ladd, and Laird Cregar; and "The Glass Key" (1942; Stuart Heisler), with Brian Donlevy, Veronica Lake, and Alan Ladd.

Nov. 12: "The Sailor from Gibraltar" (1967; Tony Richardson), with Jeanne Moreau, Ian Bannen, and Vanessa Redgrave; and "Mademoiselle" (1966; Tony Richardson), with Jeanne Moreau.

Nov. 13-14: "The Spiral Staircase" (1948; Robert Siodmak), with Dorothy McGuire, Ethel Barrymore, George Brent, and Kent Smith; and "Rebecca" (1940; Alfred Hitchcock), with Joan Fontaine, Laurence Olivier, Judith Anderson, George Sanders, and Florence Bates.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490; *a limited number of tickets are available to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing.*)

Theatre 1: Nov. 5 at 2:30: "The Last of the Mohicans" (1920; directed by Maurice Tourneur; a silent film), with Barbara Bedford, Wallace Beery, and Albert Roscoe. . . . ¶ Nov. 5 at 6: "The Television Makers" (1986; Newton Meltzer), "Made in the Bronx" (1981; Susan Fanshel), "Drum/Sing" (1985; Gregor Nicholas), and three short films by Caroline Leaf. . . . ¶ Nov. 7 at 2: A program of avant-garde films by Ernie Gehr. . . . ¶ Nov. 7 at 5: "Borderline" (1928; Kenneth MacPherson; a silent film), with Hilda Doolittle and Paul and Eslanda Robeson. . . . ¶ Nov. 8 at 2: A program of independent animation and special-effects films. . . . ¶ Nov. 8 at 5: "Peter and Pierre" (1985; Ole Henning Hansen) and "Cadmium Yellow" (1982; Richard Rogers). . . . ¶ Nov. 9 at 2:30: A program of avant-garde films by Stan Brakhage. . . . ¶ Nov. 9 at 6: "The Life and Death of Frida Kahlo" (1966; David and Karen Crommie) and "Frida Kahlo and Tina Modotti" (1983; Laura Mulvey and Peter Wollen). . . . ¶ Nov. 10 at 2:30: "The Night Is Short" (1981; Mikhail Belikov; in Russian, with English subtitles). Mr. Belikov will be present. . . . ¶ Nov. 10 at 6: "Journey to Sopot" (1981; Nana Djordjadze; in Georgian, with English subtitles) and "Robinsonada; or, My English Grandfather" (1986; Nana Djordjadze; in Georgian, with English subtitles). Nana Djordjadze will be present. . . . ¶ Nov. 12 at 2:30: "Journey to Sopot" and "Robinsonada; or, My English Grandfather." . . . ¶ Nov. 12 at 6: "The Night Is Short." . . . ¶ Nov. 13 at 2:30: "The Burglar" (1987; Viktor Ogorodnikov; in Russian, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 13 at 6: "Is It Easy to Be Young?" (1986; Yuri Podniek; a Russian film, with English voice-over), a documentary. . . . ¶ Nov. 14 at 2: "Believe It or Not" (1983; Sergej Ovtscharov; in Russian, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 14 at 5: "Adonis XIV" (1977; B. Vadikov; in Russian, with English subtitles), "A Visit to a Son" (1986; V. Tumaev; in Russian, with English subtitles), and "Neptune's Holiday" (1986; Yuri Mamin; in Russian, with English subtitles).

Theatre 2: Nov. 5 at 3 and 6:30: "Ragazzi, Nuits d'Eté" (1986; Vincent Martorana; in Italian, with French subtitles), a documentary. . . . ¶ Nov. 7 at 2:30 and 5:30: Two different programs of animated films shown at Annecy, France, in 1986. . . . ¶ Nov. 8 at 2:30 and 5:30: Two different programs of Soviet animated films. . . . ¶ Nov. 9 at 6:30: A program of films by David Ehrlich, who will be present. . . . ¶ Nov. 10 at 6:30: A program of films by Larry Jordan, who will be present. . . . ¶ Nov. 12 at 3, 4, 6:30, and 7:30: Two different programs of Superman cartoons, 1941-42. . . . ¶ Nov. 13 at 3: "The Ten Commandments" (1923; Cecil B. De Mille; a silent film), with Richard Dix and Leatrice Joy. . . . ¶ Nov. 13 at 6:30 and Nov. 14 at 2:30: "The Covered Wagon" (1923; James Cruze; a silent film), with Lois Wilson, J. Warren Kerrigan, and Ernest Torrence. . . . ¶ Nov. 14 at 5:30: "The Vanishing American" (1925; George B. Seitz; *a silent film), with Richard Dix and* Lois Wilson.

Museum of Broadcasting, 1 E. 53rd St. (752-7684)—Through Feb. 6: A retrospective of the television performances of Jackie Gleason. The schedule of performances is complicated; our best advice is to phone the museum for titles, schedules, and ticket information. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. (752-3015)—Nov. 6 at 6:30: "Final Take: The Golden Days of Movies" (1986; Yoji Yamada; in Japanese, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 13 at 6:30: "Typhoon Club" (1985; Shinji Somai; in Japanese, with English subtitles).

Reel Pieces: Film as Collaborative Art—A series of films and lectures. Nov. 5 at 8:15: "True Stories" (1986; David Byrne), with John Goodman, Swoosie Kurtz, and Spalding Gray. Ed Lachman, the cinematographer, will be present. . . . ¶ Nov. 12 at 8:15: "Les Compères" (1983; Francis Véber; in French, with English subtitles), with Gérard Depardieu and Pierre Richard. Mr. Véber will speak on his role as screenwriter. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 966-1100.)

Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. (662-2133)—"Lady Windermere's Fan" (1925; Ernst Lubitsch; a silent film), with Ronald Colman and Irene Rich. Original organ score written and played by Lee Erwin. (Nov. 4 at 7 and 9.)

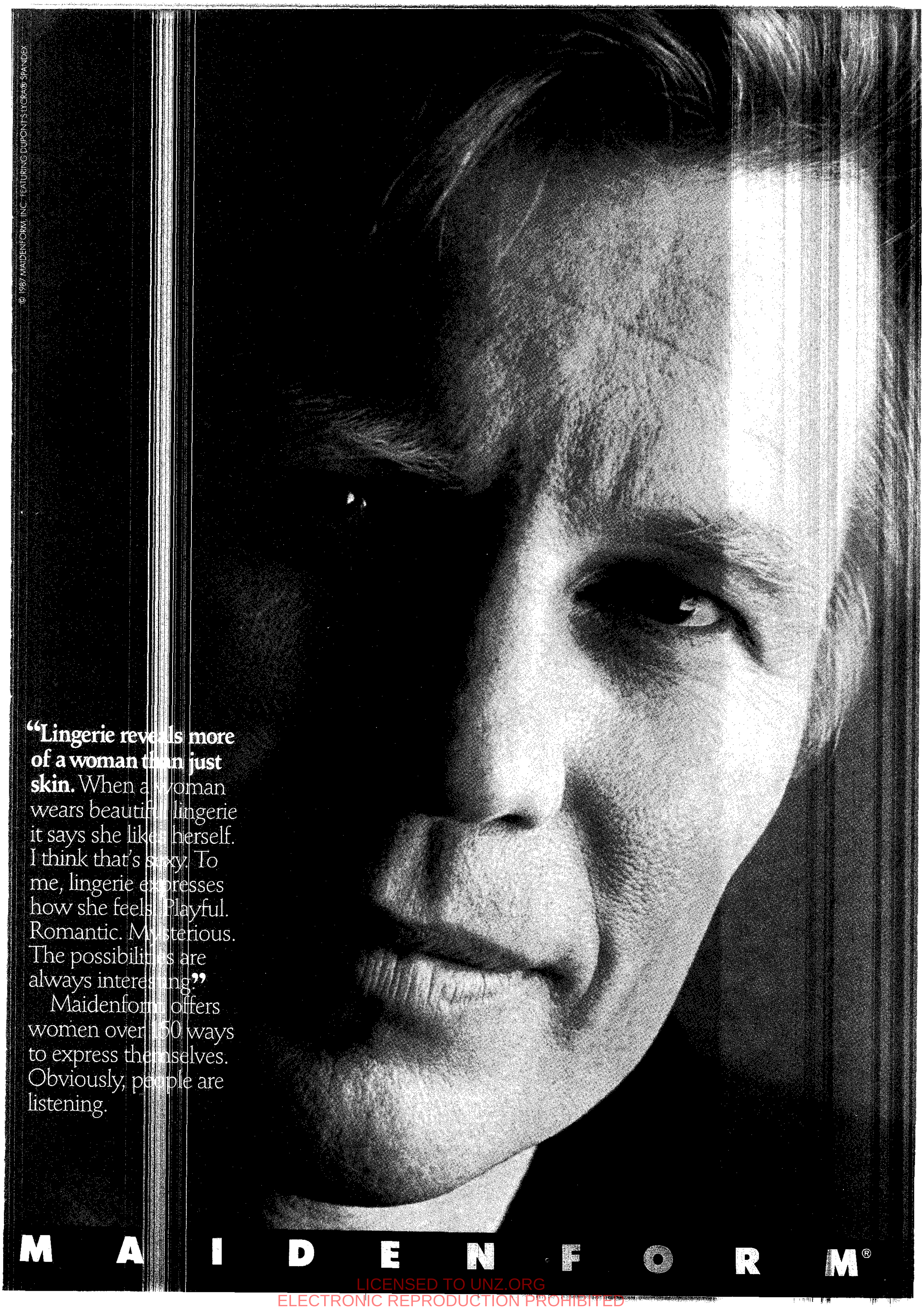
IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(Unsigned notes are by Pauline Kael; others are by Arlene Croce and Terrence Rafferty.)

Baby Boom—Diane Keaton gives a glorious comedy performance that rides over many of the inanities in this picture by the monarchs of yup: the writer-producer Nancy Meyers and the writer-director Charles Shyer. Their subject is the feminist as darling. Keaton is a Manhattan management-consulting firm's Tiger Lady until she's entrusted with the care of a baby girl. Then, her single-minded concentration gone and her status diminished, she quits, moves to a farmhouse in Vermont, meets a calm, steadying Gary Cooperish veterinarian helpfully named Cooper (Sam Shepard), and starts a venture that turns her into the biggest employer in town. Soon she's a tycoon, rejecting astronomic offers to sell out. She, her child, her lover, and her business are all booming, and the picture rattles along cheerily, cutting to the child for clever reactions, the way movies used to cut to the family dog. But Keaton is smashing: the Tiger Lady's having all this drive is played for farce and Keaton keeps you alert to every *shade of pride and panic the character feels.* She's an ultra-feminine executive, a wide-eyed charmer, with a breathless ditziness that may remind you of Jean Arthur in "The More the Merrier." With Sam Wanamaker as Fritz, Harold Ramis as the heroine's apartment mate, James Spader as her baby-faced assistant, Britt Leach as her Vermont plumber, and the twins Kristina and Michelle Kennedy as the baby. Also with Pat Hingle, Mary Gross, and, in quick flashes, Victoria Jackson, Dori Brenner, Robin Bartlett, Constance Forslund, Margaret Whitton, and many other wasted talents. Cinematography by William A. Fraker. (Reviewed in our issue of 10/19/87.) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews New York Twin, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy.)

Barfly—The sixty-seven-year-old L.A. poet Charles Bukowski wrote this semi-autobiographical script about his heavy-drinking skid-row days just after the Second World War, when he was a scrappy young man, in his mid to late twenties—a budding writer who was beginning to be published. But Mickey Rourke, who plays the role, imitates the tortoise movements of the battle-scarred survivor Bukowski, the writer-philosopher, the sage. This howler gives the movie a comic boost. Rourke twinkles with amusement at doing Bukowski, and the two principal women (Faye Dunaway as a burned-out drinker, Alice Krige as the wealthy publisher of a literary magazine) twinkle back. The



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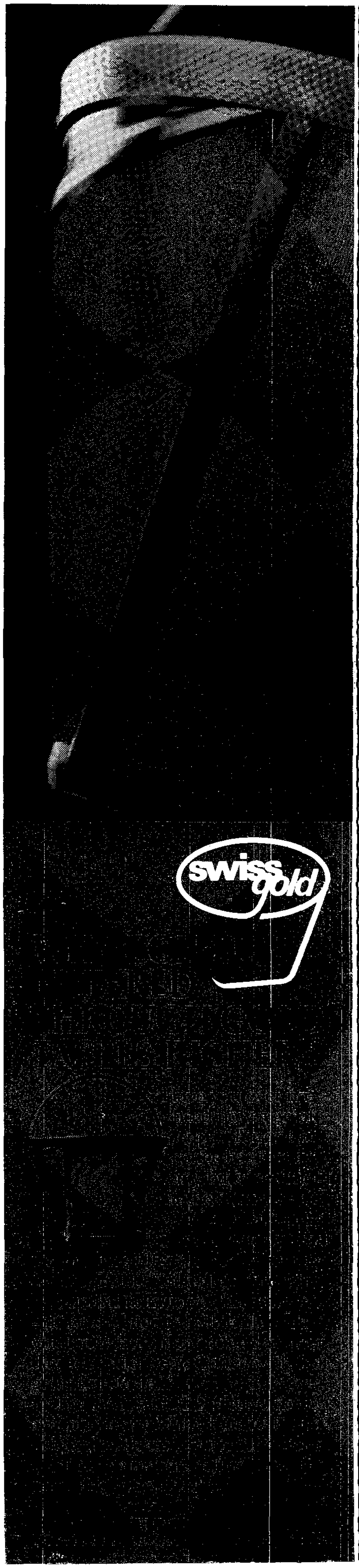

movie, though, is big on life affirmation. The hero isn't afraid to lose a fight or to hit bottom. And he isn't tempted by security. Offered the guesthouse on the publisher's estate, he snubs her; he calls her world "a cage with golden bars." (Of course, she's infatuated with his integrity.) Waking in her bed, he gets up saying, "I belong on the streets. I don't feel right here. It's like I can't *breathe!*" He goes back to his grimy haunts, where—we're supposed to believe—the real people are. This might be a film about the leader of a religious cult which was made by an altar boy. The director, Barbet Schroeder, wanting to please the Master, inadvertently exposes Bukowski's messianic windbag sensibility at its most self-satisfied. You wouldn't guess at Bukowski's talent from this movie. With Frank Stallone, J. C. Quinn, Jack Nance, and Fritz Feld. Cinematography by Robby Müller. (11/2/87) (Coronet, and Regency.)

THE BIG EASY—With Dennis Quaid, Ellen Barkin, and Ned Beatty; directed by Jim McBride. (9/7/87) (Waverly; through Nov. 5.)

DARK EYES—Directed by Nikita Mikhalkov and shot in Italy and the Soviet Union, it amalgamates several short stories by Chekhov and is the kind of movie that is referred to as a "broad tapestry." It features obviousness and mugging—each in almost unprecedented amounts. Everything in it is overacted, is too slow and too close. And everything—the peasant merrymaking, the bands of gypsies who sing, the servants who are humiliated, the decadent rich who go to spas and take mud baths—provides us with a moral lesson. Marcello Mastroianni is the weak, self-hating Romano, who tells the story of his wasted life: how he became the spoiled pet of his rich wife (Silvana Mangano), took mistresses (Marthe Keller is one of them), and at a spa was touched by the seriousness of Anna (Elena Sofonova)—Chekhov's woman with the little dog—and, on the pretext of opening a factory, followed her to Russia. Mastroianni won the best-actor award at Cannes for his performance in this massive hunk of Italo-Russian kitsch. When he's Romano, it's as if he were putting on a classroom exhibition of how to turn yourself into another person—he shows the class every bit of calculation. It's exemplary; it's horrible. The script is by Alexander Adabachian and Mikhalkov, with the collaboration of Suso Cecchi D'Amico. In Italian. (10/5/87) (Cinema I.)

DIRTY DANCING—Set in a Catskills resort in the summer of 1963, this bright dance musical is about the role that dancing had in the embryonic counterculture. It's also a girl's version of that old phony: the-summer-I-grew-up-and-everything-changed. In the boys' version, the hero typically came down to earth with a jolt. But this is a girl's coming-of-age fantasy: the seventeen-year-old heroine, Baby (Jennifer Grey), ascends to spiritual and sensual perfection. For Baby, a doctor's daughter, the change occurs as the result of self-discovery through dancing and then through her sexual initiation and her full and open commitment to the resort's working-class dance instructor, Johnny (Patrick Swayze). Too many life lessons are learned in this bubble-headed, retro vision of growing up in the sixties, and its wish-fulfillment aspect makes Baby and Johnny and all their dirty-dancing friends pure of heart—it defuses any possible explosiveness in the material. But the director, Emile Ardolino, and the choreographer, Kenny Ortega, use the dancing to bring out the sensual dreaminess of the songs, and the screenwriter, Eleanor Bergstein, writes light, rumpled dialogue that helps you over the hooey. With Cynthia Rhodes, Jack Weston, Jerry Orbach, Honi Coles, Lonny Price, Kelly Bishop, and Jane Brucker. (8/24/87) (East-side Cinema, and 8th St. Playhouse; through Nov. 5. . . . ¶ U. A. East; starting Nov. 6.)

FATAL ATTRACTION—A primer on the bad things that can happen if a man cheats on his wife. There's sometimes a fine line between sexiness and craziness, and the hero (Michael Douglas), a Manhattan corporate lawyer—a settled married man—isn't hip enough to catch the danger signals when he lets a woman book editor (Glenn Close) talk him into going with her to her loft. Once this woman begins behaving as if she had a right to a share in the lawyer's life, she becomes the dreaded lunatic of horror movies. But with a difference: she parrots the aggressively angry, self-righteous statements that have become commonplaces of feminist fiction, and they're so inappropriate to the circumstances that they're the proof she's loco. They're also the director Adrian Lyne's and the screenwriter James Dearden's hostile version of feminism. The film is about men seeing feminists as witches, and, the way the facts are presented here, the woman *is* a witch. Brandishing a kitchen knife, she terrorizes the lawyer and his family. Basically this is a gross-out slasher movie in a glossy format. It's made with swank and precision, yet it's gripping in an unpleasant, mechanical way. The violence that breaks loose doesn't have anything to do with the characters who have been set up; it has to do with the formula they're shoved into. The picture enforces conventional morality (in the era of AIDS) by piling on paranoiac fear. With Anne Archer as the beautiful homebody wife, Ellen Hamilton Latzen as the bright little daughter, and Stuart Pankin as the clowning pal. Tip-top editing by Michael Kahn and Peter E. Berger. (Dearden's script is an expansion of the forty-two-minute film "Diversion," which he wrote and directed in England in 1979.) (10/19/87) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews Tower East, and Loews Paramount.)

THE FUNERAL—This 1984 comedy was the first film written and directed by Juzo Itami; the second was "Tampopo." "The Funeral" isn't as exuberant and recklessly imaginative as the movie that followed it, but it's a funny and intelligent work in its own, more deliberate way. An Altman-like take on an Ozu theme, the film follows a large, extremely modern Japanese family through the ordeal of arranging a traditional religious funeral. Crowded together for several days in the country house of the deceased, the bewildered relatives seem to be living in a severe formal structure that wasn't designed for them. They're like actors in a poorly rehearsed classical play, on an unfamiliar stage—bumping into each other, blowing their lines, looking anxious and miserable. Itami orchestrates their discomfort with real visual wit, and the genuine grief that lies beneath his characters' farcical panic emerges clearly and unsentimentally. Perhaps the movie works because we feel Itami's empathy for the characters: like them, he's trying to find his way in a form that's a bit too controlled and elegant to accommodate his wilder impulses. With Nobuko Miyamoto and Tsutomu Yamazaki (the stars of "Tampopo"), and Ozu veteran Chishu Ryu. Cinematography by Yonezo Maeda. In Japanese.—T.R. (Lincoln Plaza.)

HOPE AND GLORY—A great comedy about the blitz. In this autobiographical film, the writer-director John Boorman has had the inspiration to desentimentalize wartime England and show us the Second World War the way he saw it as an eight-year-old—as a party that kept going day after day, night after night. Boorman lets his characters say the previously unsayable. Bored with crouching indoors during the nightly raids by the Luftwaffe, the dimply blond fifteen-year-old Dawn (Sammi Davis), the eldest of the three Rohan children, runs outside, watches the firefighters at work on a blazing house, and dances in the Rohans' postage-stamp-size front garden. "It's lovely!" she calls out. The large cast includes Sebastian Rice Edwards as the eight-year-old Bill, Geraldine Muir as his little sister, Sarah Miles as his mother, David Hayman as his father, Ian Bannen as his grandfather, and Susan Wooldridge, Derrick O'Connor, and Jean-Marc Barr as the Canadian jokester. (10/5/87) (Baronet. . . . ¶ Olympia; starting Nov. 6. . . . ¶ Quad Cinema; starting Nov. 13, tentative.)

JEAN DE FLORETTE—The setting is Provence in the early nineteen-twenties. As the hunchback Jean de Florette, an educated, nature-loving city fellow who has learned about farming from books, Gérard Depardieu wears "GOOD MAN" in capital letters across his wide brow; in smaller letters we can read "He has poetry in his soul." Jean has a devoted wife (Elisabeth Depardieu), who used to sing in opera, and a delicate little daughter named Manon. And for slightly over two hours we watch him trudge across the land he has inherited hauling two barrels of water that are fastened across his hump. When there's no rain, his plants shrivel and his rabbits die, and it's agonizing for us, because we know that there's a spring of fresh mountain water on the land. His neighbors—the prosperous, greedy old peasant César Soubeyran (Yves Montand) and César's dull-witted nephew, Ugolin (Daniel Auteuil)—have hidden the spring under a load of cement, so that Jean will be forced to sell out to them. Adapted from the first volume of Marcel Pagnol's two-part novel "The Water of the Hills," published in 1963 (it was derived from a picture he made in 1952). The story of Jean de Florette is completed in the film "Manon of the Spring" (see below). The director, Claude Berri, who did the adaptation with Gérard Brach, aimed for fidelity to the novel; he has said that it was his task to give the material "a cinematic rhythm," but "there was no need for imagination." That's what *he* thinks. The wide-screen cinematography is by Bruno Nuytten. In French. (7/13/87) (Lincoln Plaza.)

Long Live the Lady!—The hero of Ermanno Olmi's latest film is a teen-age hotel-staff trainee who wears incredibly thick glasses—through which, in the course of waiting on a large, grotesquely formal dinner party, he sees intimations of the petty dangers and sorrowful corruptions of the adult world. This is not the usual coming-of-age movie. Olmi, who's gifted enough to be (perhaps) a little restless, seems to have challenged himself to tell a psychological story in a purely concrete, almost nonverbal style. The bizarre sights and sounds of the banquet, made stranger by the boy's half-comprehending reactions to them, are pretty much the whole movie: the structure is clearly meant to be musical rather than dramatic. (Telemann plays in the background of virtually every scene.) It's all hints and suggestions, incongruous details, glints of possible meanings in otherwise opaque relationships, and teasing moments at which stories seem about to be told, then aren't. Despite the many ingenious passages and delicately funny bits of business, Olmi's experiment doesn't really succeed. It's not a common problem in movies these days, but there *is* such a thing as an excess of subtlety. With Marco Esposito as the boy and Marisa Abbate as "The Lady," the party's alarming hostess—a mummified old woman who stares at her guests through opera glasses and never says a word. In Italian.—T.R. (Carnegie Screening Room.)

Manon of the Spring—Will Fate settle the hash of César Soubeyran (Yves Montand) and his cretinous nephew, Ugolin (Daniel Auteuil), the Provençal farmers whose treachery caused the death of gentle, hunchbacked Jean de Florette? Of course it will. To keep us awake while we're waiting for the inevitable, this concluding half of Claude Berri's adaptation of the Marcel Pagnol novel "The Water of the Hills" serves up pretty much the same menu as "Jean de Florette" (see above): changing seasons (exquisitely shot by Bruno Nuytten), Montand looking sly, Auteuil gaping, wiry peasants and fat shopkeepers shouting at each other over bottles of vin ordinaire. Ten years after the hunchback's death, his daughter, Manon—whose fierce gaze at the end of the first film seemed to promise an icy, satisfying revenge—has grown up to become a ravishing, dewy-eyed blond nymph, played by Emmanuelle Béart. She looks as if she's modelling a line of designer goatherdswear for *Elle* or *Marie-Claire,* and her very contemporary sexiness might make us a little suspicious of the ostentatious purity of this big-budget period drama. Also with Hippolyte Girardot and Margarita Lozano. Screenplay by Berri and Gérard Brach, with a credit for original dialogue by Pagnol. In French.—T.R. (Plaza; starting Nov. 6.)

Matewan—This true story of a bitter, courageous strike by West Virginia coal miners in 1920 is almost stirring enough to survive the primitive and ponderous movie technique of its writer-director, John Sayles. The film aims for the simplicity and emotional purity of folk music—an effect that, in movies, is not so simply achieved. Sayles may be taking his populist, blue-collar aesthetic a bit too far: hard work and decent feeling, even in the service of a great subject, aren't always enough. "Matewan"—rousing as it sometimes is—would be a more convincing, even a purer, tribute to American labor if its honest sweat and blood were adulterated with more of an artist's cunning. With Chris Cooper, Will Oldham, David Strathairn, Kevin Tighe, Mary McDonnell, and James Earl Jones. Photographed by Haskell Wexler in the Left-lyrical style of his earlier work on "Bound for Glory."—T.R. (Quad Cine-

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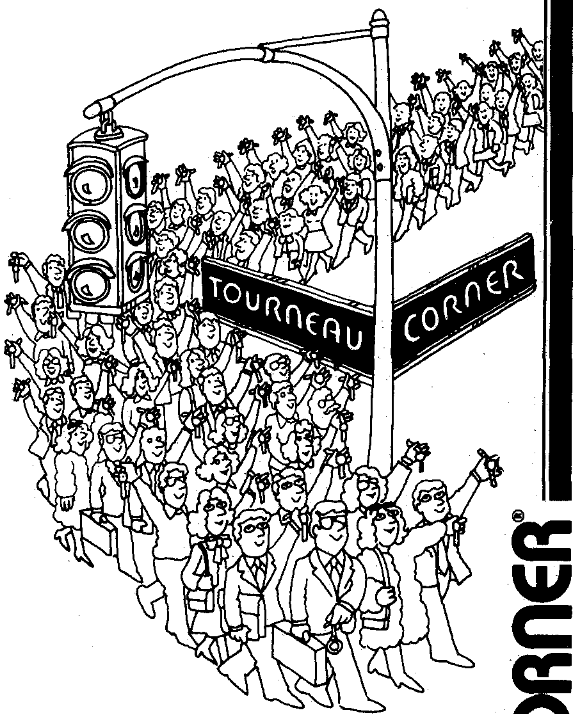

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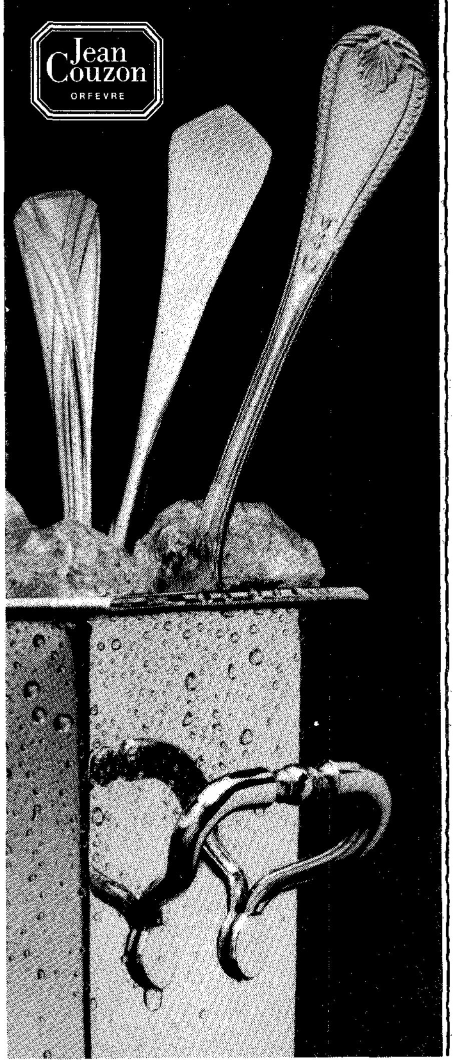

ma. . . . ¶ Metro Cinema; through Nov. 5.)

Maurice—The director James Ivory painstakingly reproduces the limp, drawn-out construction of E. M. Forster's novel, about a young man's struggle to come to terms with his homosexuality. Forster wants to show that homosexuality is natural, and so Maurice is an average Edwardian stockbroker who lives in the suburbs—a proper hale-and-hearty fellow, narrow-minded and snobbish, like others of his (middle) class. The trap for both the novel and the film is Maurice's blandness; the actor who plays him—tall, blond James Wilby—comes across as passive and slow. (You'd think being a gay man was tantamount to being retarded.) Ivory has a fine, trained eye for light and composition, but when it comes to capturing the feel of repression and of bursting desire he isn't there. The movie is suffocatingly discreet, with classical music in the clinches. Hugh Grant plays Maurice's upper-class Cambridge friend Clive Durham, with whom he experiences three years of platonic frustration, and Rupert Graves is Durham's under-gamekeeper, Scudder, with whom Maurice finally experiences physical love. Also with Billie Whitelaw, Judy Parfitt, Peter Eyre, Denholm Elliott, Ben Kingsley, Simon Callow, Helena Michell, and Kitty Aldridge. The screenplay is by Kit Hesketh-Harvey and Ivory, the dark-toned cinematography by Pierre Lhomme. (9/21/87) (Paris.)

No Way Out—This is a film noir without malevolence or mystery. It's a yuppie thriller: it has no psychological layers. Mostly it involves chasing around the glass offices and corridors of the Pentagon (actually Stage 27 at the old M-G-M studios in Culver City). But many people respond to it with hot, jumpy enthusiasm—especially to the high-level friskiness and the display of thigh in a stretch limo. A reworking of the plot of the Kenneth Fearing novel "The Big Clock," filmed in 1948, with Charles Laughton as a Henry Luce figure, the Robert Garland script features Gene Hackman as an arrogant Secretary of Defense who discovers that his mistress (Sean Young) has a lover—though not who it is—and, in a rage, accidentally kills her. His wormy yes-man aide (Will Patton) dreams up the idea that the lover is an as yet undiscovered—perhaps only hypothetical—Russian agent named Yuri, who can be blamed for the murder. Needing a front man for this coverup, they arrange to have a naval hero (Kevin Costner) put in charge of the search to find the lover and "neutralize" him. This naval hero is, of course, the lover, and the movie, told from his point of view, is about his peril. The director, Roger Donaldson, whips the action along, with camera angles changing so fast you hardly have time to ask what the chases are for or why the story points don't follow through. (9/7/87) (Art Greenwich Twin, Cinema 3, and Embassy; through Nov. 5.)

The Princess Bride—The director Rob Reiner doesn't have the craft to bring off the kinetic daredeviltry he tries for, and the movie is ungainly—you can almost see the chalk marks it's not hitting. But it has a loose, likable slobbiness. Set in the late Middle Ages in the mythical kingdom of Florin, the picture, from a script written in 1973 by William Goldman, and based on the 1973 novel that he wrote for his children, is an affectionate composite parody of the high points in adventure movies: the duels, the feats of strength, the rope climbing, the black-masked heroes, the swamps, the dungeons with medieval Rube Goldberg torture machines. Cary Elwes, who has a gift for giddy slapstick, is Westley, the blond farm boy who goes to seek his fortune so that he can claim his true love, blond Buttercup (Robin Wright). Westley is captured by pirates, and Buttercup, selected by Crown Prince Humperdinck (Chris Sarandon) to be his bride, is abducted by a trio of ruffians: Wallace Shawn, Mandy Patinkin, and all seven feet five and five hundred and twenty-five pounds of the French-born wrestler André the Giant. The cast includes Christopher Guest as a smarmy six-fingered sadist, Mel Smith as the Albino, Margery Mason as the ancient woman who boos the royal family, and, in scenes that are show-biz bliss, Billy Crystal and Carol Kane, wearing make-up that adds centuries to them, as the retired Miracle Max and his nagging crone, Valerie. These two give the movie a lift that puts it all into perspective. It's shtick softened by childlike infatuation. Peter Falk appears in the framing device. Photographed partly on locations in England and Ireland; Florin Castle is actually Haddon Hall, parts of which date back to the twelfth century. (10/19/87) (Gramercy, Beekman, Guild, and Embassy 72nd St. . . . ¶ New Carnegie; through Nov. 5.)

Someone to Watch Over Me—A Manhattan socialite (Mimi Rogers), who writes about art and looks expensively asymmetrical, witnesses a murder; a police detective (Tom Berenger), a warmhearted, decent, uncultivated fellow who lives in Queens with his wife and child, is assigned to protect her. He falls for her, and she for him, and the murderer tries to get at her. That's essentially all there is, except for the high-class hauntedness supplied by Ridley Scott, who directed. He draws you into a dull, sensual daydreaminess, but after watching Tom Berenger and Mimi Rogers for a while, you look around for the stars. With so much buildup—so much terror-tinged atmosphere—you expect actors with some verve, and you wonder why the script (credited to Howard Franklin) doesn't sneak in a few jokes. (Has a good thriller ever been this solemn? Or this simple?) Daniel Hugh Kelly brings some kick to the small role of a cop who has split up with his wife; the only performer who really stands out, though, is Lorraine Bracco, as the detective's wife—her line readings have a hardheaded urban earthiness, and her comedy timing sparks the movie. With Jerry Orbach, Andreas Katsulas, and John Rubinstein. Cinematography by Steven Poster. (11/2/87) (34th St. East, Manhattan Twin, 23rd St. West Triplex, Metro Cinema, and Warner; through Nov. 5.)

Weeds—Nick Nolte plays a holdup man serving "life without possibility"—that is, without possibility of parole. After flunking a couple of suicide attempts, he begins to write plays about imprisonment and then to stage them, and his activities win him his release. He organizes an acting troupe made up of former cons he worked with—a shoplifter (William Forsythe), a murderer (Ernie Hudson), an embezzler (Lane Smith), a pimp (John Toles-Bey), a flasher (Mark Rolston)—and they go on tour in a camper, with no money. The movie is about the men's impulses to revert to their former crime patterns, and about their efforts to become professional men of the theatre. It encompasses way too much, and it never goes very far into the issues it raises, but the messy collison of energies keeps a viewer feeling alive. The picture grew out of the director John Hancock's contacts with the convict Rick Cluchey and his San Quentin Drama Group (whose late-sixties show "The Cage" toured the U.S. and Europe); Hancock and his wife, Dorothy Tristan, who collaborated with him on the script, also did research into other prison theatre groups, and the movie gives the impression that they piled together the stories and anecdotes they liked best, and left the job of unifying them to Nolte. (He does it.) With Joe Mantegna, Rita Taggart, J. J. Johnson, and Anne Ramsey. (11/2/87) (Criterion Center. . . . ¶ Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Gemini, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex; through Nov. 5.)

The Whales of August—This is the sort of movie in which dignified old people study the horizon and ask each other, "Have you seen the whales?" It doesn't take much imagination to figure out that those whales are going to stay offscreen for the duration. Bette Davis and Lillian Gish aren't so lucky. Playing a pair of sisters who live together on the Maine coast, they're trapped before our eyes, trying to give a semblance of reality to writer David Berry's clunky, fake-Chekhovian conceits. They get no help from Lindsay Anderson's direction: the rhythm he imposes on the film is punishingly slow, and has the cruel effect of making us irritable and impatient with his elderly characters. Endangered by Anderson and Berry, the actresses somehow manage to escape with their dignity. Also featuring Ann Sothern, in good sidekick form as a gossipy neighbor, and Vincent Price.—T.R. (Cinema II.)

Wish You Were Here—With Emily Lloyd, Tom Bell, Geoffrey Hutchings, Jesse Birdsall, Pat Heywood, and Heathcote Williams; directed by David Leland. (7/27/87) (Quad Cinema; through Nov. 5.)

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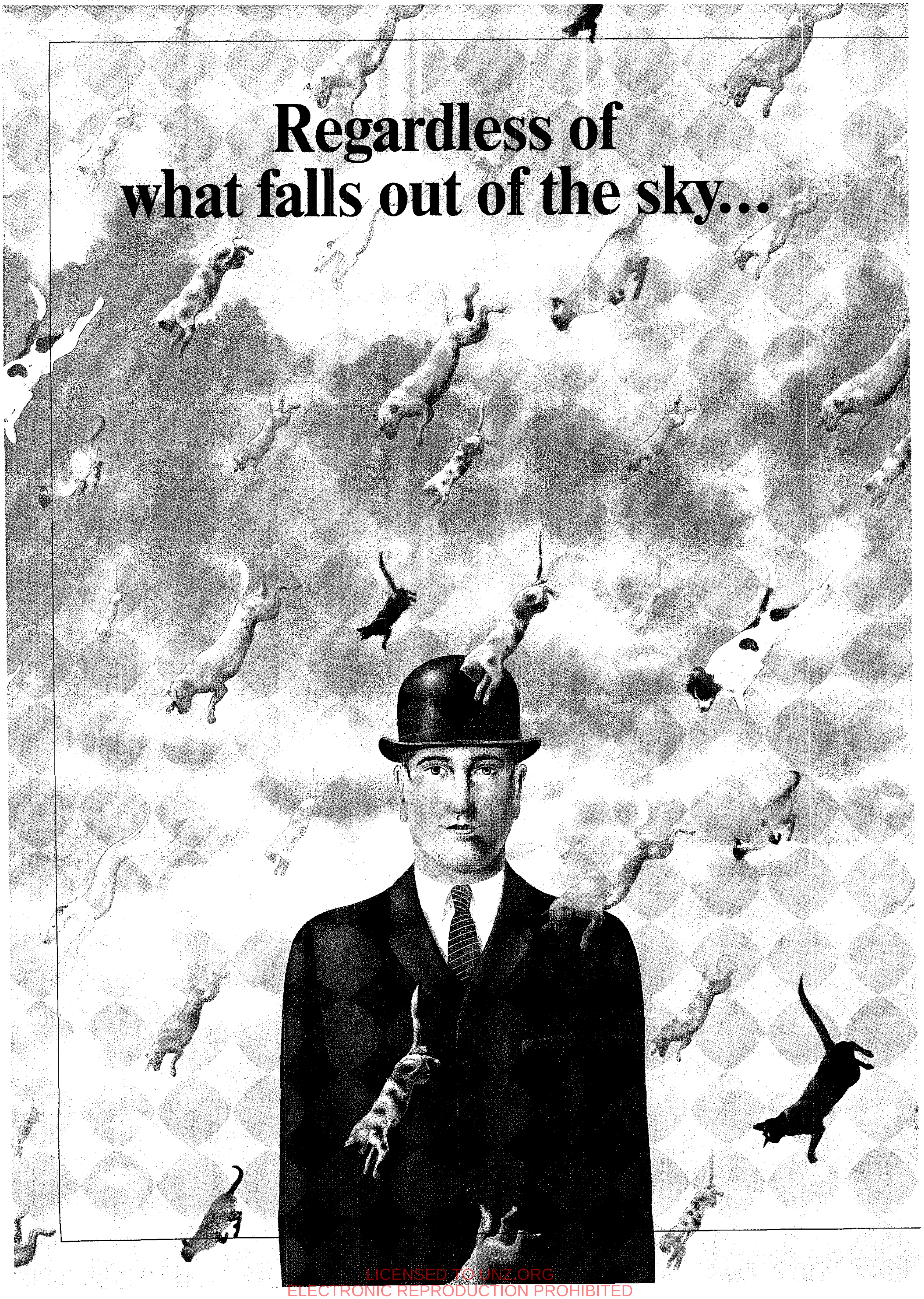
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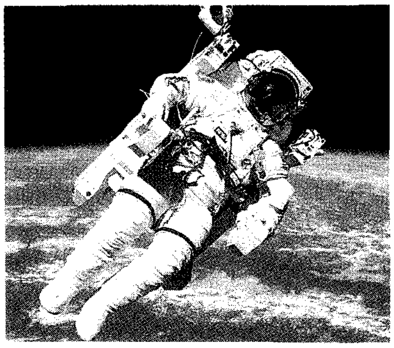

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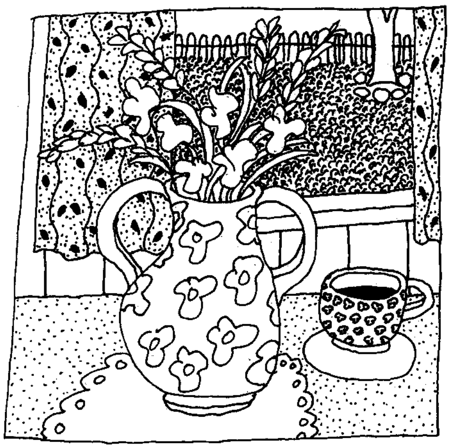
THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

OF the two hundred and seventy sailors who set out westward from Seville on five ships under the leadership of Ferdinand Magellan in 1519, only eighteen managed to return, three years later, on one worm-eaten, barely floating vessel, and Magellan himself was not among them. But the survivors had circumnavigated the globe, the first men ever to do so, and they returned with a wealth of visions and vistas. They spoke of climes where the sun and the moon appeared to move backward, and of seas where fish flew; of a remote island inhabited by little people, half a metre tall, with ears that touched the ground. They reported that in the southernmost reaches lived giant Indians who tended huge bonfires day and night to keep from dying of cold. Of all the mysteries they recounted, however, none was as bedevilling, perhaps, as the matter of the missing day: after a thousand and eighty-four gruelling days at sea, the sailors appeared, as if in compensation, to have gained twenty-four hours on the rest of the world. For them it was Wednesday, while for those ashore it was Thursday, and this, according to Antonio Pigafetta, the young Italian nobleman whose diary serves as our most valuable source of information about the voyage, "was a great cause of wondering to us . . . we could not persuade ourselves that we were mistaken; and I was more surprised than the others, since having always been in good health, I had every day, without intermission, written down the day that was current."

What had happened, of course, was that in circumnavigating the globe the crew had crossed a nonexistent International Date Line. Eventually, Pigafetta was able to puzzle out the mystery: "There was no error on our part, since as we had always sailed towards the west, following the course of the sun, and had returned to the same place, we must have gained twenty-four hours, as is clear to anyone who reflects upon it."

And yet, clear as this phenomenon may have been in the abstract, its manifestations continued to confound voyagers and settlers for centuries. The historian Derek Howse has compiled several such instances in an especially fascinating chapter of his recent book "Greenwich Time and the Discovery of the Longitude." He relates, for example, how William Dampier, an English circumnavigator, tried to account for the effect in 1687, when he had reached Mindanao, in the Philippines: "For having travell'd so far Westward, keeping the same Course with the Sun, we must consequently have gain'd something insensibly in the length of the particular Days, but have lost in the tale, the bulk, or number of the Days or Hours." Then, having noted that on some of the islands in the Pacific the natives and settlers were keeping the same day as his crew, while on others they were reckoning the date a day earlier, Dampier suddenly realized that the discrepancy depended on where the settlers of a particular island hailed from. If the settlers were Portuguese, French, Dutch, or British, and had arrived by way of Asia, their calendars were a day behind his. But if the island had been settled by Spaniards coming, like him, from America the calendars concurred. Howse records that as late as 1844 the Philippines kept "American date," while Celebes, whose longitude was the same, kept "Asiatic date."



Meanwhile, in the north, confusion abounded. After the Russians colonized Alaska, during the eighteenth century, Orthodox priests were forever being confronted with the stubbornness of new settlers—fur traders and the like arriving from America—who insisted on observing their day of rest on what the Russians took to be Monday, not Sunday. This situation went on until 1867, when the United States, after purchasing the Alaskan territory, firmly instituted the American calendar.

In 1879, the British governor of the Fiji Islands tried to enact an ordinance requiring that all the islands in the group keep the same date—the Asiatic one. The King of Samoa, however, under pressure from American businessmen, decided to make his calendar coincide with theirs. To do so, he contrived a particularly sparkling piece of diplomacy: he decreed that that year the Fourth of July would be celebrated twice.

The point is, it didn't really matter. Until the last quarter of the nineteenth century, commerce and trade were slow enough so that the great majority of people simply lived in their own present. Monday was Monday. There was no need for time zones, either: everyone's noon was actual noon, the moment when the sun was at its apex over the village spire. But as vessels of conveyance increased in speed—and as telegraphic and then telephonic traffic outpaced even the fastest vessels—some standardization became necessary. On land, this necessity became very apparent as cross-continental rail traffic grew. Before time zones were instituted, a train conductor might have to consult dozens of separate clocks on board, each set to the local time of a town that his train was to pass through; train schedules constituted a nightmare of cross-references. Finally, in 1884, an International Meridian Conference was held in Washington, D.C., and delegates from all parts of the world agreed upon the Greenwich Meridian as zero degrees longitude, with time zones to be staggered accordingly, and set the International Date Line at roughly a hundred and eighty degrees from Greenwich.

This history was very much on our mind the past couple of weeks as we observed the world's various stock exchanges caught up in their frenetic interplay. Commentators were continually trying to determine, for example, whether Tokyo was leading or following New York, whether Hong Kong was ahead of or behind London. Was it still yesterday or already tomorrow in Tokyo? Almost everyone seemed confused. The computers and the stockbrokers, however, were not. The technologies and the standardizations of time have advanced to the point where, for all intents and purposes, there is but one continuous present worldwide. Although the great majority of the world's people have remained utterly oblivious of the recent calamities on the stock exchanges (to them, the frenzy on Wall Street, if they were to learn of it, might seem as otherworldly as the visions described by Magellan's crewmen), those calamities are going to have an enormous impact on the life of this planet. The futures being optioned these scary days are everyone's.

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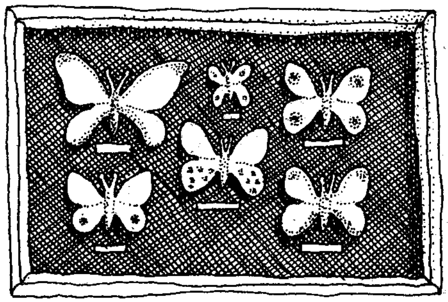
Charles Trenet

ONE way to describe the French singer and songwriter Charles Trenet, who gave a concert at Avery Fisher Hall recently, is to say that he is a mixture of Irving Berlin, Noël Coward, and Jean Cocteau, with a dash of Maurice Chevalier. At seventy-four, M. Trenet has, to his own great surprise, again become a French institution—ranking, he says, somewhere between Jean-Louis Barrault and the Eiffel Tower. His celebrated light baritone has deepened a bit, and his mobile face has acquired a few more lines, but the irreverent, slightly nutty Trenet persona—he wears a small, ridiculous hat pushed to the back of his head and calls himself Le Fou Chantant—continues to amaze and amuse French-speaking audiences. During the thirties and forties, he was the idol of Paris—in 1939, Janet Flanner described him in these pages as "Harpo Marx and Chaliapin, mixed"—and many of the catchy, sophisticated songs that he composed then have been revived in recent years by performers who weren't even born when he wrote them. Lately, Trenet has been appearing on French television—the perfect medium for his *boulevardier* singing style—and has found an army of new fans, who snap up his reissued records and pack every one of his live performances.

Trenet has been performing steadily in night clubs, concert halls, and films for more than fifty years. (He once shared a vaudeville bill with Yvette Guilbert, the scrawny, black-gloved singer in the famous Toulouse-Lautrec poster.) His songs—he has written more than nine hundred—range from ballads about love, the joy of living, and a happy childhood to bizarre tales that bring to mind the Surrealistic juxtapositions in a Magritte painting. In Trenet's imaginary world, postmen fly, ducks speak English, a kangaroo becomes a house pet, an eager lover undressing a lady finds her to be a wax statue, and a man checks his horse at a bar and forgets it for fifty years. Some of his most popular songs have acquired English lyrics—"At Last! At Last!," "Beyond the Sea," and "I Wish You Love"—and have been recorded by the likes of Sinatra, Streisand, and George Benson. But nearly always Trenet has written his songs with himself in mind, and to appreciate them properly one needs to hear him sing them in person.



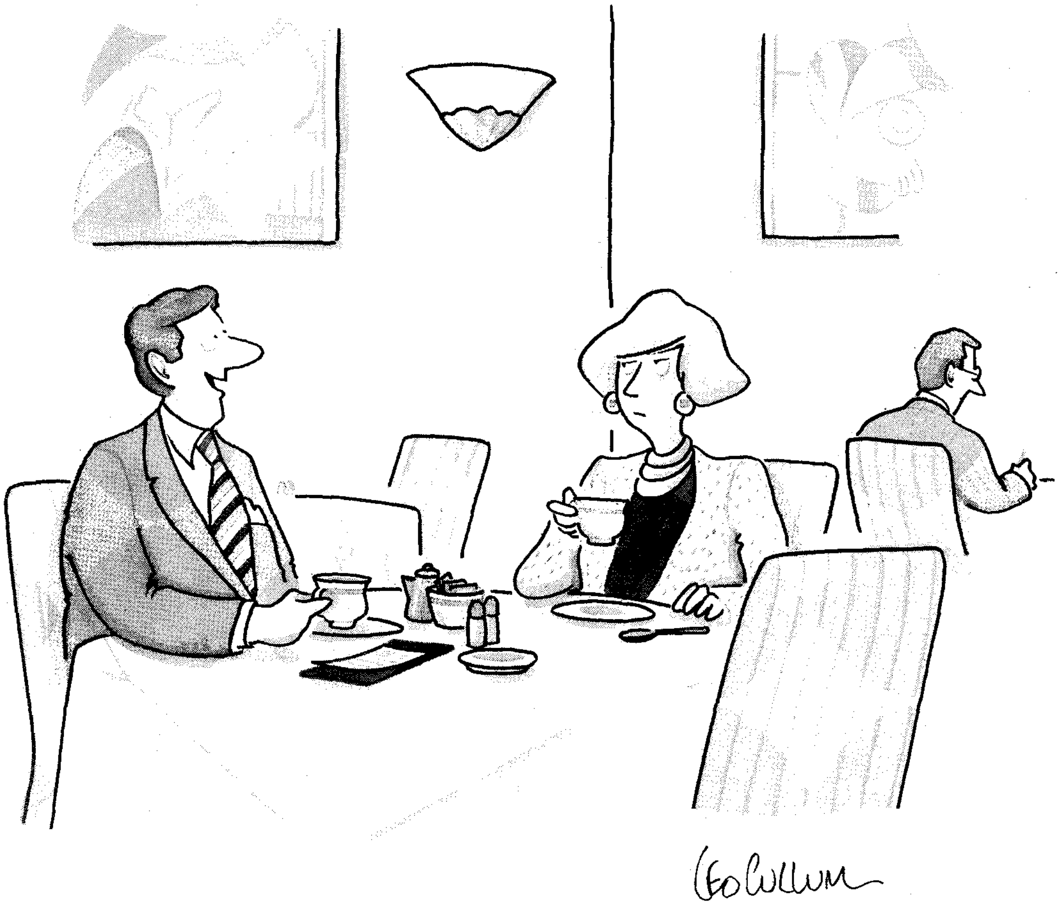
We have cherished several scratched Trenet records for a number of years, and when we heard that *le grand Charles* was coming to town for a concert we seized the opportunity to meet him. We found him in the Polo Lounge of the Westbury Hotel on the day before the concert, sipping tomato juice to cure his jet lag (he told us he flew over on the Concorde, and sat next to Pavarotti, who had no idea he was with a fellow-singer) and discussing his program with his manager, Gilbert Rozon. M. Rozon showed us a list of thirty-odd titles and explained that the final choice of material was always made at the last moment. "This keeps things fresh and unpredictable," he said.

M. Trenet, a trim, elegant man with a round face, sparkling blue eyes, wavy reddish-blond hair, and an irresistible smile, agreed. "I have been surprising audiences for fifty years," he said, "and I see no reason to stop."

We complimented him on his fluent English, and he smiled and replied that when he chatted with Mrs. Reagan during a visit the Reagans made to Paris in 1982, a State Department interpreter had to translate his English into her English. "I hope I have improved since then," he said. "But, of course, I haven't been here for twenty years. My first engagement in New York was at the Embassy Club in 1946. I don't think many people understood my songs then, but they liked the melodies. So when I came back to play the Capitol Theatre in the nineteen-fifties I introduced each song with a little English résumé."

"How did you get into songwriting?" we asked.

"I grew up in Narbonne, near the Spanish border, and I started out to be a painter," M. Trenet said. "My family sent me to Paris to study at the École des Beaux-Arts, but after a couple of months I dropped out and got a job at a film studio. Eventually, I found a partner, a young Swiss pianist named Johnny Hess, and as Charles et Johnny we wrote songs and developed a successful music-hall act. Our partnership broke up in 1936, when I was called for military service. I was stationed at an airbase near Marseilles, and as I was always breaking the rules I was often in prison—a circumstance that gave me plenty of time to compose words and music.



“Would you mind getting lunch? All my money is in a blind trust.”

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From that period come some of the songs—‘Je Chante,’ ‘Fleur Bleue,’ ‘J’ai Ta Main,’ ‘Polka du Roi’—that are still popular today. ‘Y A d’la Joie,’ my first big hit, was introduced by Maurice Chevalier—he agreed to sing it in a revue as a wedding present for my publisher. In 1937, when I made my solo début, at the Grand Hotel in Marseilles, I adapted my stage costume—blue suit, blue shirt, white tie—from the Air Force uniform I was wearing offstage at the time. I have since made five films, published five books, recorded a good deal of my repertoire, and performed in theatres all over the world.”

M. Trenet told us that he divides his time among several houses. “I rent an apartment near Paris,” he said. “But I spend more time in the South. I paint a lot—I think you’d describe my style as Impressionistic—and I love cars. The pride of my collection is a Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud, which I bought new in 1957. She is a white convertible with beige leather upholstery, and when I take her into Cannes for the day she is greeted like a queen.”

“How do you go about composing a song?” we asked.

“I like to play with words, and then I wait for musical inspiration to knock on the door of my head,” M. Trenet replied. “I have a bizarre imagination. It can be set off by a place, a person, a picture, an event. This morning, when I was walking up Madison Avenue I saw a sign that said ‘Everything Must Go,’ and I thought, What a wonderful idea for a lyric! In French, this phrase can describe a fantasy in which everything must disappear. Perhaps I will set it to music as the first song about the *trou noir*—the black hole that astronomers tell us is out there somewhere in the universe. I don’t write music, and I play the piano badly, but enough to work out the harmony for a song. Then I record it and give it to my arranger. Let me illustrate.” Heads lifted all over the Polo Lounge as M. Trenet went over to a piano and began to play “La Mer.” (Benny Goodman introduced this to America in 1945.) He segued into “Le Jardin Extraordinaire,” a more recent song, about a very peculiar garden in the center of Paris, and then told us that some publicity advertising his concert as a farewell to America was misleading. “An artist never retires,” he said. “It’s the audience who retires from *him*. I will go on singing until I see people running for the exits.”

Of Time and the Railroad

WHAT the people at the Metro-North Commuter Railroad hadn’t really *emphasized* to the members of the Thomas Wolfe Society was that, while the railroad was going to be naming a car after Thomas Wolfe at twelve-fifteen at Track 37 of Grand Central Terminal last Thursday, there wasn’t going to be enough time for a truly expansive—a truly *Wolfean*—occasion. The car would have its moment of glory and then it would have to go back to work. At noon, it would be just another graffiti-proof commuter car; at twelve-fifteen, it would become the Thomas Wolfe; and thirty-five minutes later it would have to be dutifully scooting north to Westchester. So the ceremony was a little pressed—“a little Hemingway,” one of the Wolfeans joked. The president of Metro-North said a few words, and they were appreciative, but they were also extremely *succinct:* “It’s a pleasure for Metro-North to be dedicating this piece of equipment to Thomas Wolfe. I wish I could express myself on this occasion as well as Mr. Wolfe would probably have done, but I can’t. I run railroads. He wrote.”

Outside the circle of Wolfeans, a larger, slacker circle of commuters had begun to gather, waiting for the train. A lot of “What the hell?” looks were passed around as a director of the Wolfe Society, a young corporate lawyer named Jerry Podair, read two dense passages about trains from “Of

Time and the River" and "You Can't Go Home Again." He had to read quickly, and so when he came to a passage about the railroad and its "infinite murmurous all-taking unity of time" the moment was neither as infinite nor as murmurous as he had imagined it would be when he rehearsed the night before at his apartment in Chelsea. ("Just a few blocks away from the Chelsea Hotel," he pointed out later, shyly but proudly, "which Wolfe called home, for a time.")

After the dedication, the Wolfeans held a reception downtown, at the home of the biographer Carole Klein, whose last book was a much-praised life of Wolfe's mistress Aline Bernstein. Jerry Podair invited us to come down and meet the other Wolfeans, and then began to talk about his own love for the works of Thomas Wolfe. "I read 'Look Homeward, Angel' when I was eighteen, and I thought, Here is somebody writing just to me, writing just *for* me, talking about me," he said. "I still feel that way. His work is so full of lyricism and great emotion. It isn't for everybody, because it's so long. But if you're able to stay with it it's the best writing you've ever read. I was always talking to my family about Thomas Wolfe—Thomas Wolfe and the Mets are really it for me. Then, five years ago—it was one of the most important days in my life—I saw an article about the Thomas Wolfe Society. The next year, it met in New York, and I went, and suddenly I had two hundred friends. Everyone was talking and thinking about Thomas Wolfe. And I had always thought that I was alone. I didn't think I'd ever have the courage to speak at a meeting of the society, but I spoke last year, actually. I spoke on Thomas Wolfe's relationship to lawyers. It was a little embarrassing, because Wolfe hated lawyers. He thought that lawyers were unprincipled people, and to an extent that's correct. Sometimes, they're not the deepest people emotionally. But lawyers aren't really dishonest—they're part of a system they can't change. I think Thomas Wolfe didn't really appreciate how hard it is for incredibly emotional, lyrical people to be lawyers."

In Carole Klein's living room, Jerry Podair began to point out particularly notable Wolfeans among the men and women gathered there. He nodded toward a small, intense older man off by himself eating a turkey sandwich. "That's Aldo Magi. Aldo is one of the most remarkable people I've ever met. He's worked all his life in a factory in Sandusky, Ohio. He's not an academic, but he has assembled one of the great collections of Thomas Wolfe memorabilia in the world. One of the things I like best about the Wolfe Society is that it isn't dominated by academics. There are plenty of scholars in it, but there are a lot of people like me or Aldo, who just love Wolfe."

"The thing about Wolfe," Aldo Magi said after we'd been introduced to him, "is that he had the strange magnetism of genius. No matter what he did to people, they would still crawl through the *muck* for him. Look at Max." He meant, of course, Maxwell Perkins, Wolfe's first editor. ("People here tend to talk about Tom and Max and Aline the way Mets fans talk about Keith and the Doctor," Jerry had explained a few minutes before.) "He turned on Max, but Max always loved him. He could be a miserable man. Oh, he could be a miserable man—"

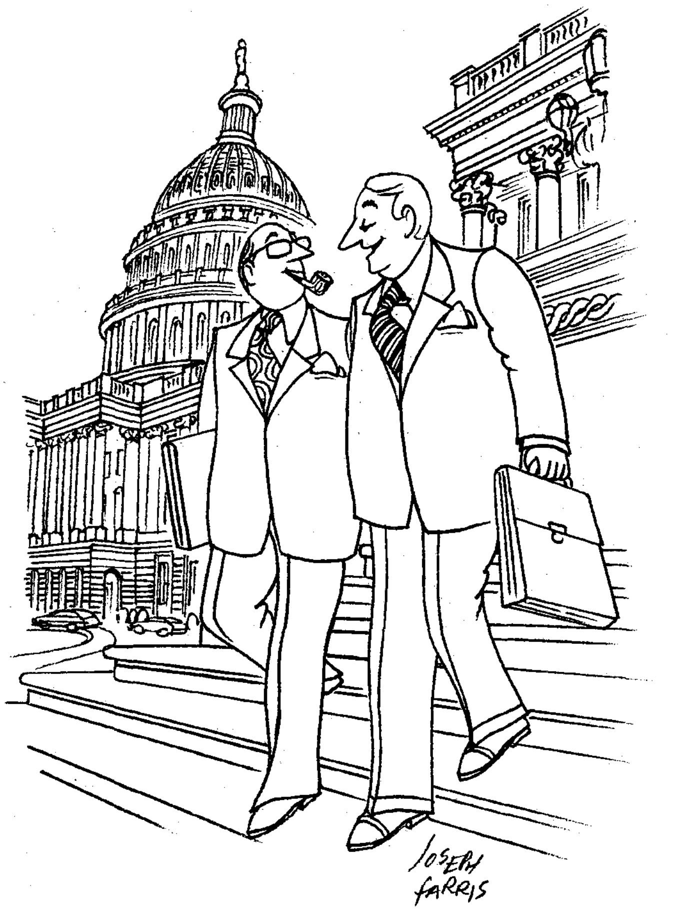
"You always have to remember that he had a tumultuous childhood," Jerry said.

"A *tumultuous* and *love-starved* childhood, Jerry," Aldo said. "His mother used to shift him from room to room. He never had a bedroom. He never had a place that he could call his own. And so he became the bard of the homeless of the heart. And because of that, Jerry, he never trusted love. Tom never trusted love. Now, listen, I know that Wolfe, like all great geniuses, broke some rules, and all those college professors who kiss Henry James's ass are never going to forgive him for it. But if, despite everything he did, all these people would still crawl through the *muck* for him, then all I want to ask the professors is this: What the hell kind of magnetic guy are we *talking* about?" He looked up and saw Carole Klein approaching. "Carole," he said, "I was just saying that when you think about what everybody—Max and Aline and Belinda—went through with Tom and how they would still crawl through the *muck* for him, this shows just how much—"

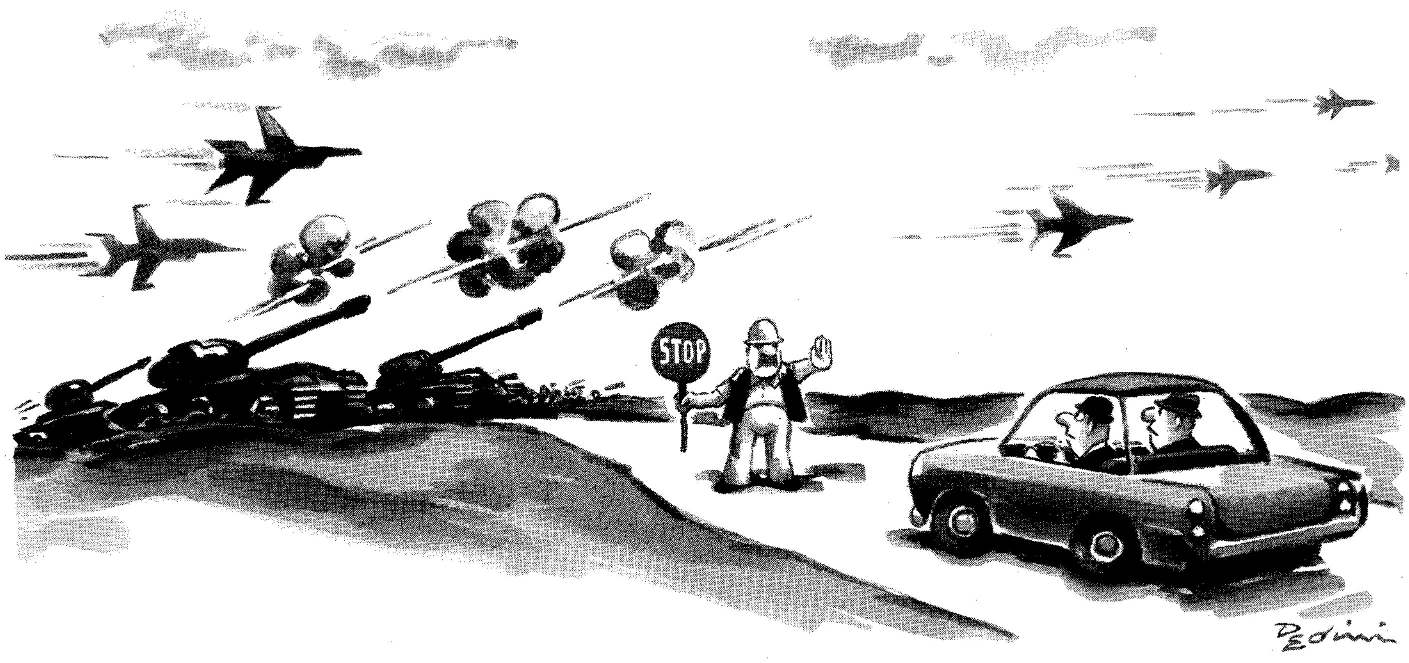
"I don't think, Aldo, that Belinda was quite the woman Aline was," Carole Klein said severely. (Belinda Jelliffe was one of Wolfe's close friends.)

Aldo looked slightly taken aback. He said uncertainly, "Well, no, but even if she didn't have the *depth* of Aline, Belinda would still have crawled through the *muck*—"

Jerry laughed nervously. "Say, Carole, have you seen Jim Cleary?" he asked.



"I'm not running for reëlection. I already have enough material for my book."



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Jim Cleary, he told us, is a member of the society who likes to produce videos inspired by the writings of Thomas Wolfe—“sort of documentary and yet sort of poetic.”

Jerry and Carole went off to look for Jim Cleary, and Aldo began to reminisce about his involvement with Wolfeana. “I was just in my teens when I became so enamored of Wolfe,” he said. “I felt that here was someone writing just for me. In my feeble, uneducated way, I became a collector. I had three hundred items, and I thought, That’s enough. But now I have close to four thousand items. Of course, I’m not as bad as some. There’s a woman who called me and wanted to open Wolfe’s casket. I may be crazy, but I’m not that crazy. I often think about a phrase from Wolfe—‘dark miracle of chance.’ That’s what my life and my collection and my whole involvement with Wolfe have been—a dark miracle of chance.”

Finally, Carole and Jerry found Jim Cleary—he’d been delayed because his train was late—and everyone was invited into the living room to see a Wolfe video he had prepared specially for the occasion. The room was darkened, and images of trains began to appear on the television screen: calendar art of romantic steam locomotives from the thirties mixed with more prosaic recent snapshots of contemporary trains—a long line of freight cars passing a grade crossing. Train sounds rose and fell; violins swelled and then subsided; and a flat and uninflected voice—Jim’s, in fact—began to read passages about trains from the writings of Thomas Wolfe: “The golden pollinated haze of the warm autumnal afternoon . . .” *Thud, clunk, thud, clunk;* swooning strings; snapshots of boxcars dissolving into more snapshots of boxcars. “The rude mysterious visage of the powerful dark and lonely earth . . . ” *Chug-chug-chug;* what sounded like the theme from “Now, Voyager;” old paintings of locomotives steaming into mountain tunnels. “Nothing but the rails, the moon, the earth, and the strange silence, and the haunting inmost visage of America by night . . .” *Toot-toot;* a caboose at twilight; more strings.

Afterward, Aldo took our right arm in both hands. “Did you hear that line in Jim’s video?” he said. “ ‘All that remained was a handful of lost echoes.’ *That’s* beautiful stuff! Learn from it! Write, and don’t be afraid to make it lyrical!”

Friends

WE went downtown one evening recently to meet Kenny Rogers and his friends and help them celebrate the publication of his second book of photographs, “Your Friends and Mine.” (The first, “Kenny Rogers’ America,” came out in 1986.) Where downtown? Central Falls Restaurant & Gallery, the famed brunch spot in SoHo, where people have been known to stand in line for hours waiting for a stack of pancakes.

At six o’clock, the restaurant was already crowded, with people milling around while they waited for the artist to show up. The owner, Bruce Goldstein, told the gallery director, Lysa Capone, that she had spelled Rogers’ name wrong on the wall where his photographs were being displayed. She fainted—almost—and ran off to check the spelling. Bruce was joking.

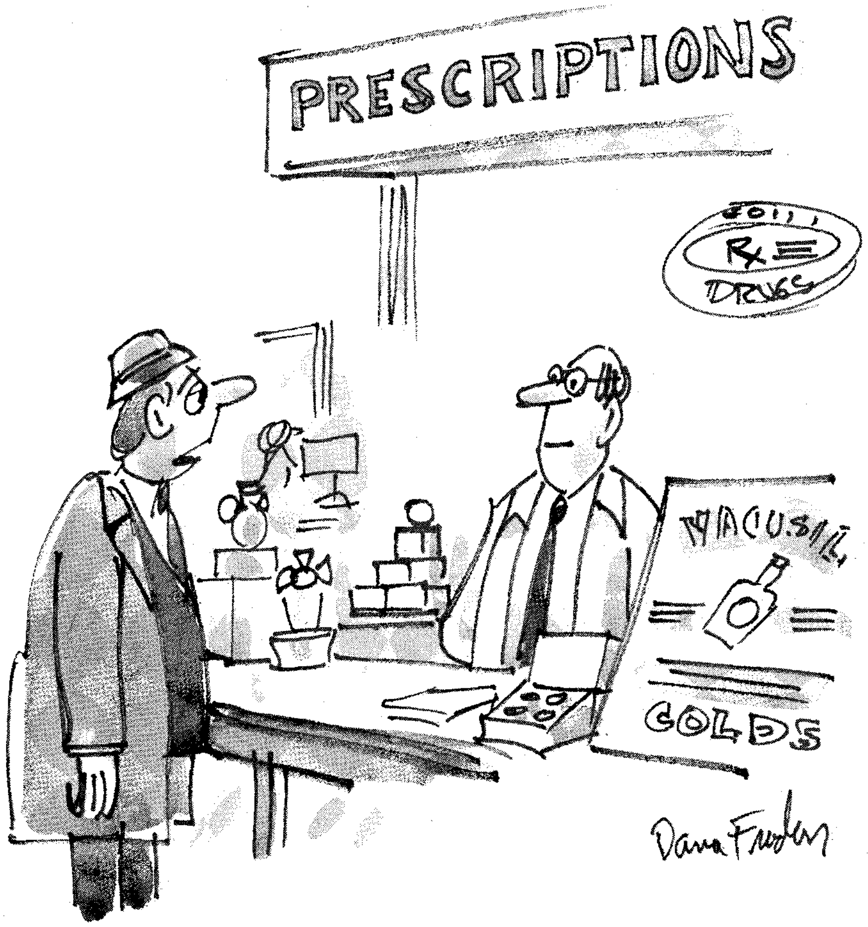
Kenny Rogers walked in at six-fifteen, with his wife, Marianne, on his arm. He was wearing a silky dark dotted-swiss jacket, which brought out the gray streaks in his hair. Marianne wrinkled up her nose and grinned and said, with a genuine smile, “This is a real nice place. Look how nice they did it all up.”

The maître d’, who kept reminding everyone that he had the official Kenny Rogers guest list, said to no one in particular, “She’s beautiful, she’s exquisite—his wife. Where have I seen her before?”

Someone told him that she used to be on “Hee Haw.”

“Oh, I didn’t see her there,” he said. “I wouldn’t be caught dead watching ‘Hee Haw.’ ”

TV people with minicams and microphones were asking Kenny the same questions over and over: “Is it easy to get these great stars to participate?” “How’d you ever get to photograph Michael Jackson?” “Why did Michael Jackson sign ‘1998’ on his photograph?” “Are you and Michael friends?” Kenny gave the same answers over and over. He said, “I



"I'll have an ounce of prevention."

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truly do this out of the sheer love and the challenge." He said it wasn't difficult to get people to let him take their picture, because once they knew that Michael Jackson had done it they were willing to be photographed, too. He said he had been the first person to photograph Michael with Bubbles, his chimpanzee. After Michael, Kenny said, he went to good friends like Linda Gray, Linda Evans, and Bruce Boxleitner. He said he had the advantage of being able to shoot these people not only as a photographer but as a peer. He said he could really understand the discomfort and unease a celebrity must go through for a photo session.

Next to each picture in the book is a— Well, the press release says it best: "A charming and witty reminiscence by the photographer of the subject or the sitting completes his personal look." In the reminiscences, Kenny tells how he shot the person, how he knew the person, where he took the picture, or a funny thing he said during the shooting. When he took the picture of Ronald Reagan, Kenny recalls, he wasn't making much sense, and said something like "Oh, Mr. President . . . How nice to meet you. I've heard so much about you." Gems like that are sprinkled throughout the book.

Linda Gray herself was at the party. Each time she got in front of the cameras to tell her story, she asked the TV people if she was shiny or sweaty. Linda told CNN that Kenny kept trying props; that her dog came in, a big German shepherd; that she did different things to her hair; and that finally Kenny gave her some clothes to put on, she looked at them, and said, "Ugh, I can't wear these," and Kenny asked her to just try, and she said to herself, "Oh, no, all my credibility in the fashion world will be lost." So the picture is a profile of her wearing jeans and a sweater and leaning against a big chair. "He got me and I'm forever grateful," Linda said of the picture.

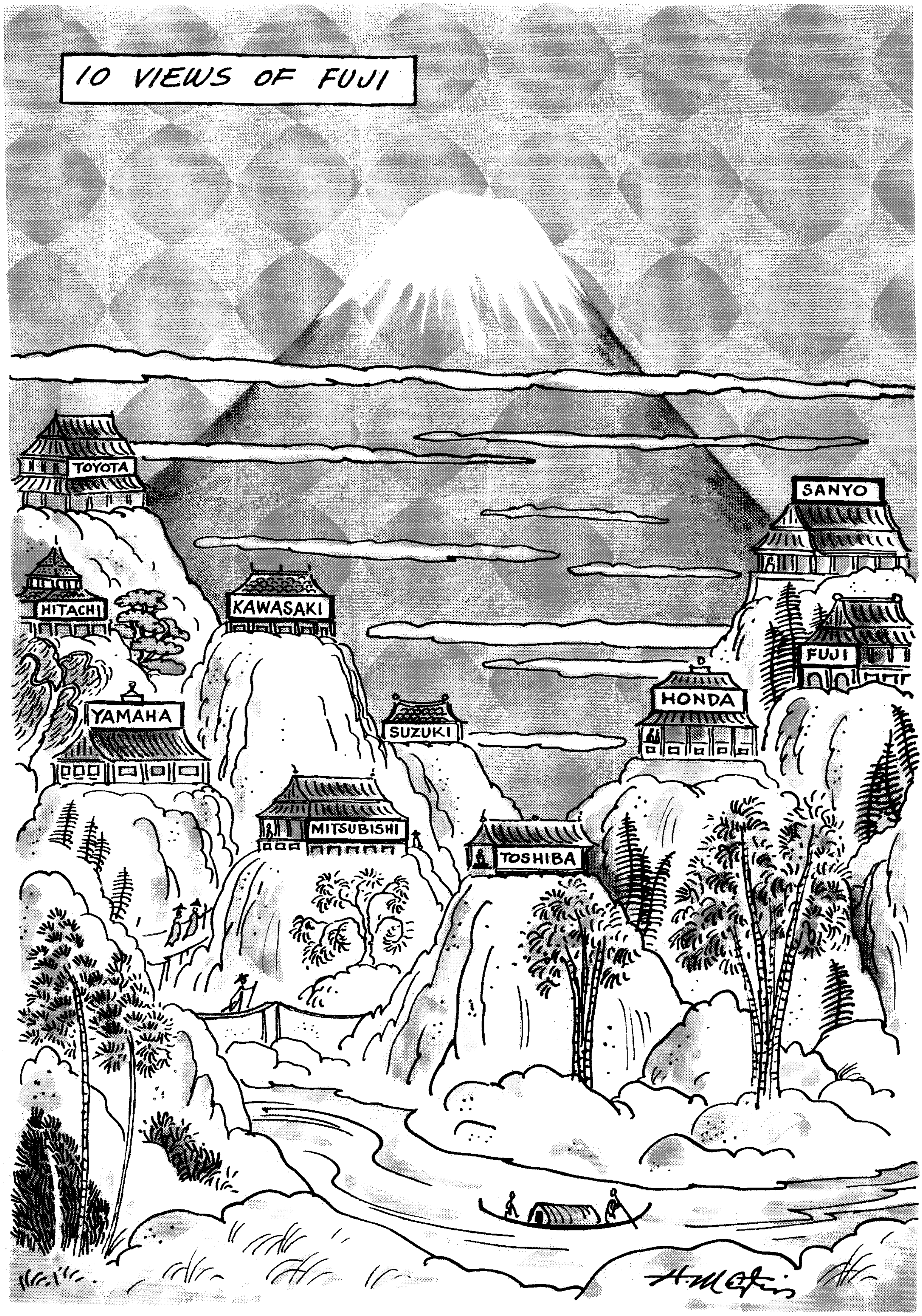
Many of Kenny's friends had signed the photographs of them on display at Central Falls. Looking at them was a lot like reading a high-school yearbook: "Kenny, May all your negative be positive. I love you. Thank you, Dolly." "To Kenny My *Man.* Always, Sammy." "Dear Kenny, is there a talent you don't possess?? It was great working with you! What a team!!! Love Linda Gray." "Miles Davis. Don't ever change, Miles." "To the Gambler: Thanks for teaching me to know when to hold em, know when to fold em, know when to walk away and know when to run. May the trail always be kind to you, Bruce Boxleitner."

In the introduction to the book Kenny says that there are three ways he likes to photograph his subjects: as they see themselves, as the public sees them, or as they've never been seen before. The picture of Bruce Boxleitner is an example of the first way. He's seen leaning on a saddle, and wearing a Levi's jacket, an outlaw-type bandanna, and a cowboy hat with a little wild-game feather stuck in it. Kenny says the man you see here is the real Bruce Boxleitner, cowboy through and through. Jaclyn Smith is dressed up in black leather, posed against a motorcycle—an example of someone photographed as she has never been seen before. And the picture of Morgan Fairchild is an example of someone photographed the way others see her. She's in a balloon-filled plastic-looking bathtub, with a bubble machine blowing bubbles in the background. Kenny says this image for the shot came to him in the middle of the night.

At the end of the evening, we talked to Kenny's assistant, Bernard Boudreau, who told us that Kenny is someone who needs instant gratification—he used to carry a portable darkroom with him on the road and would seal up a hotel bathroom and use it to develop pictures he had taken that day. He said that Kenny will walk offstage after a concert and burst forth with an idea for a photograph that he was thinking about during a song. He said that Kenny works so hard he makes everyone else look bad. Kenny himself says that what makes his book different and special is that "other photographers may have shot a lot of these people but nobody has photographed all of them in one year."

A woman floating through the crowd said, "I love the one of Barry Manilow."

Her companion said, "Kenny really has managed to capture the celebrityness of our friends and his."


10 VIEWS OF FUJI
TOYOTA
SANYO
HITACHI
KAWASAKI
FUJI
HONDA
YAMAHA
SUZUKI
MITSUBISHI
TOSHIBA

ABUNDANCE

CARS full of men, women, and children come in off the road, follow the track down between the rows of stripped plants, and unload in the sun beside the farmhouse. Baker is there to greet them. The pockets of his baggy denim coat hang heavy and ominous; the kids give him nervous smiles.

He has a ball of twine in one pocket, a letter and a pair of scissors in the other. But he has a reputation for sneakiness, for insidious attacks out of nowhere. He isn't to be trusted. He holds his hands aloft, empty, and only then do the children feel safe to turn and run. Far off in the fields, the first projectile is launched and misses.

Baker's brother Mack arrives, family in tow, impatient to begin. His wife, Felice, is gorgeous—mint-eyed, with abundant black hair stuffed under a Funk cap, and her beauty has been passed unmarked to her children, Ross and Stephanie. Ross is eleven, Steph is nine. Ross is getting tall like Mack, but the flashing sensual danger that has informed his eyes almost since birth is Felice's gift to him. Steph has a better arm than her brother and wears her black hair cut close to her delicate skull. She jumps out of the car with a sense of purpose; she exits on the side away from Baker, knowing that he may be armed, and leaves her brother behind as she sprints into the fields.

Felice stays in the car, smiling out at Baker. She won't emerge until he lifts his hands up like a man under arrest. Mack turns off the engine and makes a show of unloading provisions from the trunk. He looks packed tight in his old jeans and sweatshirt, eyes hidden behind red shades.

"Come out," Baker says, leaning over to get a better look at his sister-in-law.

"Put your hands back up," she orders, laughing, knowing he will obey.

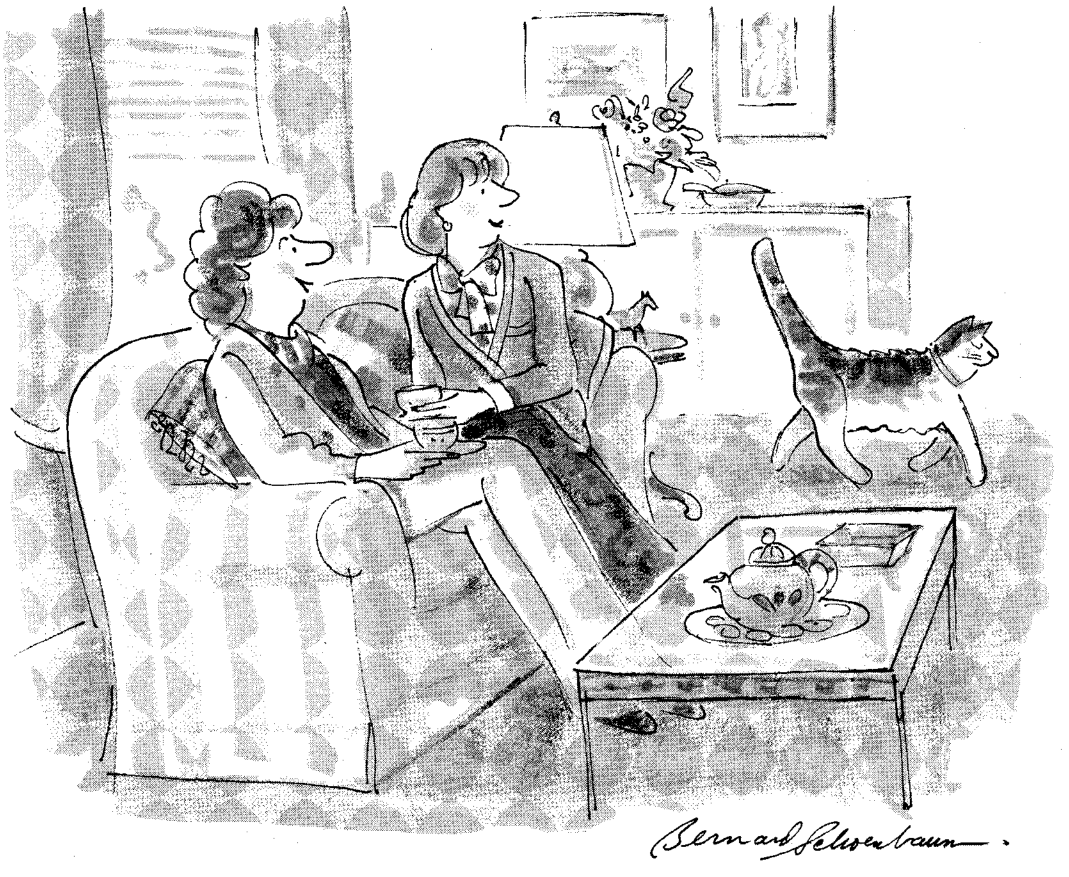
He does, and that is when her husband attacks. Mack has brought tomatoes from home; they are fresh, crisp, and they hit Baker in the forehead and in the chest with a solidity that transmits real pain. They do not explode mushily, safely rotted and soft, but rather hit and crack open, then hold their shape. Baker takes a step back, hand over his head wound. When the second shot strikes his chest he melodramatically collapses on his butt. Already he has judged that he is not hurt, but he sees a chance to have Felice make a fuss over him.

Lathrop's pickup steers in off the road. He toots his horn. The bed is full of kids, too many to count; they begin to jump off like paratroopers as the truck comes up the lane. Shots are fired. A tomato splatters against Lathrop's door. Another goes in the window and out the other side without touching anything, and Lathrop jabbers about good omens when he parks the truck. Baker sees his son, Clarence, take a hit in the shoulder, a gory explosion of seeds and pulp spreading in the air behind him.

Lathrop has brought his own boy, Donald, and a pack of neighbor kids, who change from year to year. Donald is a shy boy with pale, bad skin and bony arms. He has no old clothes to sacrifice to this event; he wears what he always wears—jeans thin at the points of friction, a red cotton shirt, and a sweatshirt he won from Clarence throwing knives. Marilyn, Donald's mother, has remained at home, cloistered in a shyness of her own. Baker has never spoken to her, has only seen her pass in the truck, driving too fast in her hurry to be elsewhere.

"It'll be great when that interchange is finished," Mack says, watching Felice wipe dripping tomato from Baker's forehead with a tissue, her hand curled around the back of his neck, a finger running along an earlobe. "We have to go a good ten miles out of our way to get here."

It is Sunday, and a mile to the east wait the machines that bring a shiver to the earth. All week Angela can feel it in the kitchen floor. The machines skim like lizards over the dirt, shaping it into cloverleaf arcs. An exit off the tollway is being built. It is a feat of political wizardry that took four years to accomplish. The



"She has her own agenda."

businesses in town pushed hard for the access ramps. They already are counting their money, planning expansion. The construction of a shopping mall within sight of Baker's house is at present a hard rumor. He has received three offers for this property; even the lowest of the three represents an astonishing amount of money.

Baker misses Donovan. He was on the phone with him earlier in the day, discussing money and tomatoes. Donovan usually attends this event, but his back went bad during the harvest. Half his crop didn't get in. The kids he usually brought with him had no way of getting to Baker's this year, and their presence is missed. The battle seems threadbare for lack of soldiers.

The air is full of tomatoes and screams. The Wallaces arrive with their children and a couple of dogs. Margo Wallace, moments after getting out of their station wagon, takes a hit in the neck. Dewey, her husband, a gentle man, opens fire on her from a yard away and lands three shots before Mack comes to her rescue and drives her husband off. Margo opens fire, hitting Mack in the thigh.

No one is paying attention to Baker, so he drifts, fancying himself invisible, along the wall of his house, across the yard, and then into the unmowed grass behind the picker shack. The air in the shack smells of Lysol. He has hidden a bushel basket filled with tomatoes there. It is a tactic his father employed when he was the host for these tomato wars. Baker's father always said his proudest moment was the year Baker and Mack ambushed him inside the shack with his own tomatoes, having finally figured out the stratagem.

Baker arms himself with a half-dozen soft, rotting tomatoes still fresh enough to hold their shape. He loads three into his pockets, carries two in his right hand and one in his left, his gun hand. He looks out the door. No one is around. The squealing is in the distance. He puts his right hand behind him, his left in his pocket—a nonchalant posture that will fool nobody. Through a line of weeping willows he sees Felice running, being chased. A tomato zips past her head; he wants to call to her, guide her to safety. Her husband is in pursuit. He runs hard, and when he is close he lunges at Felice's legs, but she slips the tackle and Mack slides on his face through tomato slime. Everyone has a good laugh at his expense.

THE RETURN OF THE
MINIPANTS

Dirk Dutcher, a city boy, a pal from law school, attacks Baker from behind. Dirk and his family have slipped into the party while Baker was arming himself in the picker shack. Baker sees Emily Dutcher pulling baby gear out of the rear of their car, and he lifts his hand in greeting while remembering that Dirk is not in sight, and sly, and to be avoided. A tomato hits Baker in the back then, with such force that he feels the moisture gush straight through his clothes to his skin. Emily hoots. Turning, Baker takes another wet missile under the jaw, and it occurs to him that he has been hit four times without getting off a shot.

"Give up," Angela calls to him from the kitchen window. The urge is strong to lob a big one at her, let the screen purée it all over her.

Instead he starts to run, leaping over the rows of plants, over the ruts left by the trucks that came and took his crop away to be turned into soup. He is a surprise to many, the way he gallops up on them and lets fly with his tomatoes before they can flee. He gets Clarence good. He hits an anonymous kid in the head on the run. He uses his last four rounds with care, two on Mack and two on Felice, hitting them each once. Before they can retaliate, he runs back across the field and up the back stairs of his house to the mudroom.

Angela hands him a towel and clean clothes. He bathes standing at the downstairs bathroom sink. He knows he will find tomato seeds stuck in odd places for the rest of the winter.

His wife watches him from the door. "Have you finished paying homage to the tomato god?" she asks.

"I'm meeting with Lath before dinner," Baker says. "I can't face him looking like one of the help."

His wife is in a good mood, because tomato season is over. At the bottom of the basement stairs, in a cool, dark locker built by Lathrop in exchange for a break on his rent, are several hundred jars of tomatoes. Angela knows they will never eat them. The jars at the back are velvety with dust. At the end of the day she will dispense jars of tomatoes to each of her guests, even the children, as if it were a requirement of their leaving. In a small plot off the back door is her own garden; she grows a variety of things, but not a single tomato, in an enclosure she built herself of rabbit mesh and pine lumber.

IN MEMORIAM

The thought of you is receding like a chambermaid given notice—
no!, like a railway platform, with block-lettered "Dvinsk" or "Tatras."
But odd faces loom in, shivering and enormous;
also terrains—only yesterday entered into the atlas—
fill up the vacuum. None of us were well suited
for the status of statues. Probably our blood vessels
lacked that hardening lime. "Our family," you'd have put it,
"gave the world no generals, or—count our blessings—
great philosophers." Just as well, though: the Neva's surface
can't afford yet another reflection, brimming with "mediogres."
What can remain of a mother with all her saucepans
in the perspective daily extended by her son's progress?
That's why the snow, the poor man's marble, devoid of muscle power,
melts, blaming empty brain cells for their not so clever
locks, for their failure to keep the fashion wherein you, by putting powder
on your cheek, had meant to look forever.
What is left is to shield the skull, with raised arms, against idle glances,
and the throat with the lips' non-stop "She has died, she has died," while endless
cities rip the retinal sacs with lances
clanging loud like returning empties.

—Joseph Brodsky

• •

SHE and Baker had met when he opened his office in the city. His father was still alive, raising tomatoes for the soup company. He had wanted Baker to return from college and learn the farm, but Baker had ambitions as a computer-software patent attorney. The amorphous nature of that work mystified his father, as had the death of his wife seven years before from a disease that never showed itself but quietly took her from within.

Baker advertised for a secretary, and from nearly forty applicants he selected Angela, who could type passably well and take dictation fast enough to suit him but also exhibited a levelheaded humor that sat easily with Baker and reminded him of his mother. Business was slow in the beginning, and for hours they sat by themselves simply talking, feet up on the tables, taking turns getting cold drinks from the machine in the hall.

He talked mostly about his father and the emptiness he felt each time he went home. His father was counting on him to grow tomatoes, to turn his father loose in his final years with the knowledge that all that he had built would not fall away when he was gone. It was not something Baker could promise.

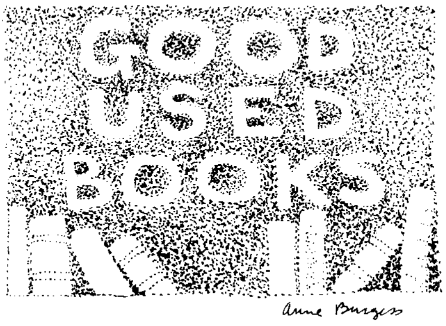
Mack had already married and moved away. There seemed no arguing with Felice's allure. Her family lived in the city, in a tower where the doorman gave Mack a hard time when he came to pick up Felice; gave him a hard time until Felice's father called the doorman off.

If Mack had not met Felice, Baker's father said, something else would have taken him away from the farm. He never had any interest in the place.

As their father aged, the work on the farm became too arduous for him. Baker hired Lathrop. He was a stringy young man with a pregnant wife. He took over the second house and immediately became indispensable.

"I get such a kick out of watching him work," Baker's father said. "He's a machine. Doesn't need much sleep. Doesn't need much food. Today he roofed and painted the picker shacks over on his share."

Lathrop farmed a quarter of the total acreage his first year. Baker gave him a third of the land his second year, and half the acreage his third year.



One afternoon a wheelbarrow rolled over his father's foot and crushed a small bone. Baker spent mornings and evenings at the farm, making breakfast and dinner. Many of those nights he slept over, starting to feel a little trapped. He placed calls to Angela in the dead of night. From that farmhouse, lying on the kitchen floor to stretch a kink in his back, he asked her to marry him.

He installed a computer, but his dad had no interest in learning how it worked. He wrote a program for the farm, and it worked so efficiently that he adapted it for a generic farm operation, patented the software under the name AgriStar, and lived comfortably with Angela on the proceeds. She quit work as his secretary, they married, they moved to the farm, and she became pregnant with Clarence.

Her pregnancy was difficult, full of vomiting and fevers, an ordeal made worse by the presence of Baker's father and the onset of a vicious winter. Baker had to rise at 4 A.M. to plow out the drive to the road, then hope a county plow would open the road so he could get to work. He would leave his wife bowed over the toilet, a cool cloth held to her forehead.

His father slept late. The broken bone in his foot had never really healed, and in compensating for it he threw out the fragile alignment of the rest of him. He was in pain, and bitched a lot. At noon, he began to take little drinks of Scotch. He did not care for Angela. He had no sympathy for her condition. She was a dividing force, taking time from his son better spent on him.

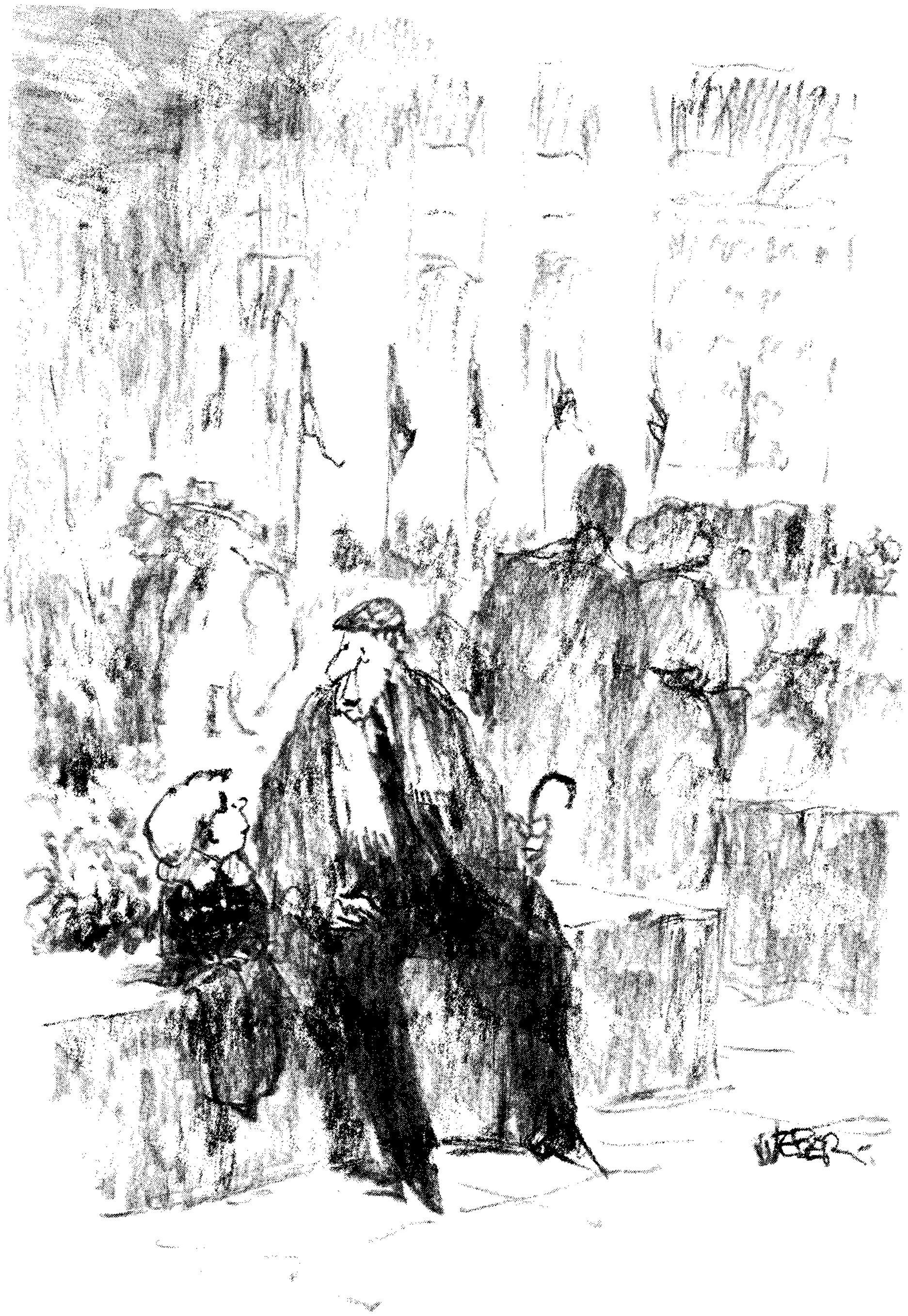
A package arrived in the mail. It was a modem Baker had ordered, and when it was installed he could work from home. He did not leave the house for nearly a month. He phoned his office in the morning, hooking into the computer there. Groceries were trucked in from town. The deliveryman parked at the end of the drive, honked until Baker signalled from the house, then left the food by the road. Baker hiked out through the drifts to retrieve it. He was careful to tell Angela where he was going; she grew fearful when he was out of her sight. Her sickness abated. A genial air settled. Baker worked in the amber light of his computer, trying to give it enough information to see the future. They counted the days until winter broke.

In early March, Baker's father caught a cold; he said it came up through the break in his foot. His condition deteriorated to the point where they took him to the hospital when Baker drove Angela in to have her baby. Baker became lost in a maze of admitting forms; a pregnant woman and an old man with a severe cold logged in by one person under the same insurance carrier taxed the imagination of the admitting nurse and the computer she worked on.

When Baker took Angela and Clarence home, his father stayed behind. He liked being in the hospital. The nurses found him charming and affable. The food was good. He enjoyed the attention, the indolence.

Baker tried to visit every day, every other day. The trip was sixteen miles each way. The snow was a problem. He found the hospital depressing. A nasty little hack remained in his father's chest, and no combination of medication and breathing apparatus could dislodge it. They put him on oxygen, on intravenous antibiotics. He lay in bed and watched game shows on the TV that hung from the ceiling. The little mask covering his mouth and nose fogged and cleared. He was not improving.

On another day he was sitting up in bed when Baker arrived. He seemed himself, his sour humor returned. He asked about his grandson, who was having trouble getting enough to eat from his mother. Angela's nipples were cracked and sore; she rubbed cream into them each night in a tantalizing ritual before kissing Baker good night and turning her back on him. She would not let Baker help with this chore.



"Always exaggerate. It makes life seem more interesting."

Baker and his father talked about the farm for a while.

"With all this snow," his father said, "you forget there's good ground underneath. About this time every winter I start to think we'll never see another tomato."

"Angela's got a ton of them in the cellar," Baker said. "If you ever get the urge to look at one."

His father laughed, dipping his head down. At the last moment he reached behind his pillow and took out the little oxygen mask and clamped it over his face.

"Do you need the nurse?" Baker asked, coming to the side of the bed.

His father shook his head, paused, and then started to nod. A harsh, sobbing cough came from him. Baker went out the door, into the cool hallway, and shouted for a nurse. A young girl in a green smock came at a disinterested pace. Baker's father was sucking at the oxygen with a panicky greed. His face had begun to turn blue. The girl pushed a button near the bed, and within moments two nurses appeared; the second one through the door pushed Baker into the hallway. Nurses and doctors tumbled out of the stairway and off the elevator and sprinted toward his father's room. Baker recognized none of them. So many of them went into the room, and stayed in, that he wondered where they would all fit, wondered if they would get in each other's way and be less effective at combatting the thing that had hold of his father.

Baker went to a phone at the end of the hall and called Mack. He arrived with Felice an hour after their father died, and Baker was ashamed that his grief was eased significantly by the sight of his sister-in-law.

LATHROP comes into the mudroom. He steps out of his boots and hangs up his jacket with the dutiful air of a well-mannered child. Angela calls out to him; he answers politely. She sees him peel off his pants, and beneath them is a clean pair of pants damp in spots where tomatoes soaked through.

"Who's winning?" Baker asks, coming into the kitchen.

"Hard to say," Lathrop says. "The dark-haired girl, the pretty one? She's taking a beating."

"Felice," Angela says.

Baker tries to spot her through the window, but the battle has moved far away from the house in the constant search for fresh ammunition.

"This seemed like a good time to sit down and talk," Lathrop says to Baker.

"Dinner'll be in about an hour," Angela says.

Baker feels relaxed in Lathrop's presence. He reminds him of his father. There is the same stubborn absence of frills, of an interest in anything other than his family, his land, and the niceties of growing tomatoes.

They take seats in the office—Baker at his desk, Lathrop in a hard-backed chair. He stretches out his legs, picks a tomato seed off his shirt cuff and sets it on his tongue. Baker flicks on the computer, puts in a disk.

"Smaller crowd than last year," Lathrop observes.

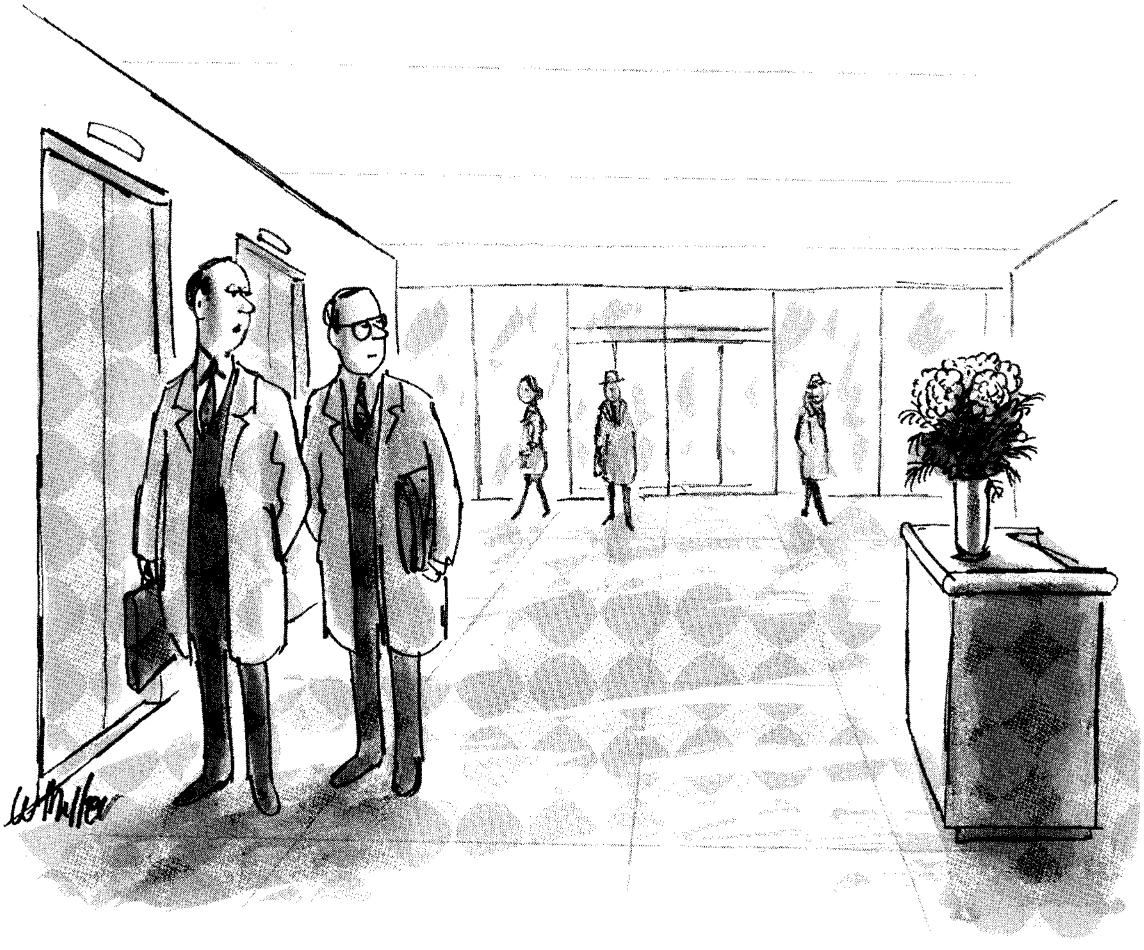
Baker taps keys; numbers, a history of his farm, appear before his eyes.

"Kids get older," Baker says. "They get different ideas of fun. Donovan's back is shot, and he usually brought eight or ten kids."

"A crowd all by themselves," Lathrop says. He leans slightly forward to try to get a look at what is on the screen, but can see only the faint amber shimmer that falls onto Baker's desk top. He removes a sheaf of papers from inside his shirt. He has a pencil behind his ear.

Lathrop is there to be paid his share of the final harvest. Throughout the year Baker compensates Lathrop with a small salary and by deferring some payments for rent, water, electricity, heat. It is a system that requires painstaking bookkeeping, because the amounts they deal with may be as small as eight or nine dollars a day. Baker has it all in his computer. Lathrop's version of their financial dealings is kept on the sheets of blue-lined paper that he smooths over his leg. He has set the numbers down in pencil; some are smudged, especially those that he began to record following last year's harvest.

Lathrop clears his throat. He has written a figure in ink on the last sheet. It is what he hopes to be paid by Baker. Because he doesn't precisely know Baker's expenses for seed, insecticide, fuel, insurance, pickers, taxes, and the like, his figure is an educated guess. But he has been at this for years, every autumn he makes a yearly estimate, four years ago he came within fifty-five cents of his desired total. He knows pretty well what things cost. He knows they have grown and shipped a lot of



"Flowers in a lobby are good P.R."

tomatoes. He knows within two or three cents the price per crate Baker got from the soup company. He knows exactly the debt he has compiled with Baker over the year. The entire year, its essence, his love of it, is caught in the seed that he plays with in his mouth. He is delaying the delicious moment when he will bite the seed, feel the tomato within it.

"I talked to Donovan night before last," he says to Baker.

"How is he?"

"In pain. But happy. They offered him forty-four per acre for his place."

Baker says, "I've been offered as much as sixty-one."

Lathrop bites the seed in two. He can only wait for Baker to go on.

"Donovan going to accept?" Baker asks.

"Wouldn't you? Bad back. Kids to raise."

"In Donovan's situation, I guess I would," Baker says.

"He says they're going to get it anyway, might as well let them make him rich," Lathrop says.

"What does Donovan have? Six hundred acres?"

"At least. Maybe a thousand," Lathrop says.

Baker taps keys, filling in blanks in an equation.

"If he has six hundred," he says, "that's two million six."

Lathrop whistles as though the amount were a surprise. "That'll buy a back operation or two," he says, repeating a joke Baker himself heard from Donovan.

"I'd love to see my dad in this spot," Baker says.

"He'd never bite," Lathrop says firmly. "He'd never have sold this land."

"I don't know," Baker says. "This kind of money—it'll turn any man's head. Even Dad's. It's like money in a dream."

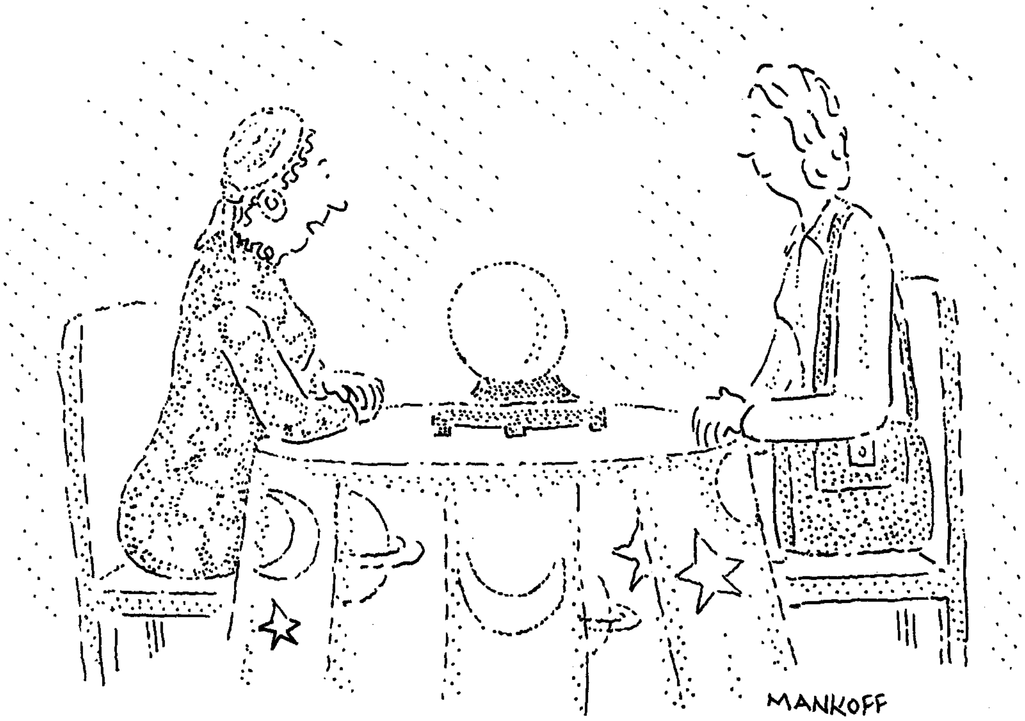
"What does Angela say?"

"She's afraid of doing the wrong thing," Baker says.

"What about the harvest?" Lathrop says.

Baker touches a key on the computer. "My figure for your share of the crop, less what you owe me for the year, is pennies shy of thirteen thousand dollars. So let's call it that," Baker says.

Lathrop nods. He was expecting fifteen hundred less, counting on it, balancing the coming year on it. The extra fifteen hundred is like a glow in his middle, an almost sexual sense of well-being that will make the rest of this day perfect. He will pick at the implications of that unexpected money all night, and by morning he will have whittled it down to its true stature in his life, but for now he reaches and shakes Baker's hand, to put a stamp on his good fortune.



"Benedict will learn that Shana is his daughter. Mike will resign from the police force because of his involvement with Carla. Jim will share a kiss with Nora after accusing Hope of having a fling with Nate to spite Derek. Philip and his sidekick Addison will plot to abduct Shana from Khalif's warehouse hideaway, but during the shootout your vacuum will cause a short resulting in the complete loss of your TV reception."

• •

BAKER's yard is like a camp for the wounded. Warriors from the field lie about scraping tomato drippings from their hair, shaking wet pulp from inside their shirts. Baker looks for Felice, for Mack, but they are not around. Angela has stacked old towels on the porch and turned on the hose. It seems like an invitation to a new form of warfare. But hunger and exhaustion have settled in; everyone wants to get clean enough to be allowed into the house to eat.

"Mack and 'Lice are upstairs," Angela tells Baker.

"What for?"

"They wanted a hot shower."

He can hear the water in the pipes, now that he listens for it. The upstairs shower is one of the house's problems; a hidden leak produces damp fungus on the ceiling of the first-floor bathroom.

He carries a tub of mashed potatoes to the table, then walks back into the kitchen. Angela hands him nearly an armload of utensils, and he takes his time setting them out. The seating arrangement calls for the adults and some of the children to have places at the main table, with two smaller tables stuck like moons in the corners for the extra children.

He keeps listening to the running water. He hears the shower basin groan when he returns to the kitchen, and he is speechless with wonder and curiosity at the possibility of his brother and sister-in-law in the shower together in his own house. He would not put it past Mack to make love to his wife there in Baker's shower to hold as a secret triumph. He has boasted before, when it was just the two of them drinking beer, when they were most like brothers, of unexpected sexual locations. He recounted escapades with his old girlfriends, which amused Baker, and with Felice, the details of which struck Baker like sparks to the face. Telling these stories is a thrill for Mack. He knows his brother is half in love with Felice.

Angela gives him a tray of glasses to put in place. She follows with pitchers of tea and lemonade. Children he does not recognize have begun to find seats at the extra tables. Some still have tomato bits in their hair. Others have made an attempt at getting cleaned up. Their hair gleams, they have seeds in their ears. They have peeled off muddy overalls to reveal clean clothes beneath. They have left their caked boots in a line in the mudroom.

Clarence comes in and smiles at his father. Angela gives him the pitcher of lemonade, and he begins to pour.

"Who won?" Baker asks.

"I got in some shots," Clarence says proudly. "I got Uncle Mack a real good one. Point-blank. Right in the back of the head."

This report cheers up Baker, and he reaches to slap his son's palm.

Felice appears, her hair wrapped in a towel, her face scrubbed. The water is still running in the pipes, so Mack is in the shower alone, a revelation that leaves Baker elated.

"He got me, too! The punk," she says to Clarence. "Right in the butt."

Baker watches his son turn red. He sees in Clarence's shyness something of himself, of the way this woman infects him.

She unwinds the towel and lets the black nest of her hair fall free, tipping her head forward so her hair hangs in a bundle that she shakes, spraying droplets. She takes a brush from her back pocket and begins to work at the tangle. Baker longs to help her.

More strange children come into the room. They are polite, taking their seats at the outer tables. Ross and Steph appear. Ross has a welt under his eye.

"What happened to you?" Baker asks.

"Rock."

"Someone threw a rock?"

"In all the excitement," Felice says, whipping her hair back off her face, "someone mistook a rock for a tomato."

Baker touches the area around the wound. Ross pulls away. There is swelling, bruising, a small opening in the skin.

"How about some ice for that?" Baker asks.

He wraps some cubes in a dishcloth in the kitchen. Ross sits grudgingly and accepts the cold pressure Baker applies to his cheekbone.

"You want to hold it?" Baker asks.

"I can't eat holding this."

"Keep it on until dinner's ready," Baker says.

"And don't whine," Steph scolds.

"Shut up," Ross answers.

Felice puts a hand on her son's head, and it is enough. He sits hunched over, leaning into the cool relief the ice offers.

It is time to eat and Mack hasn't come down.

"Go get him," Felice tells Baker. She has taken a seat between her children. "He's your brother."

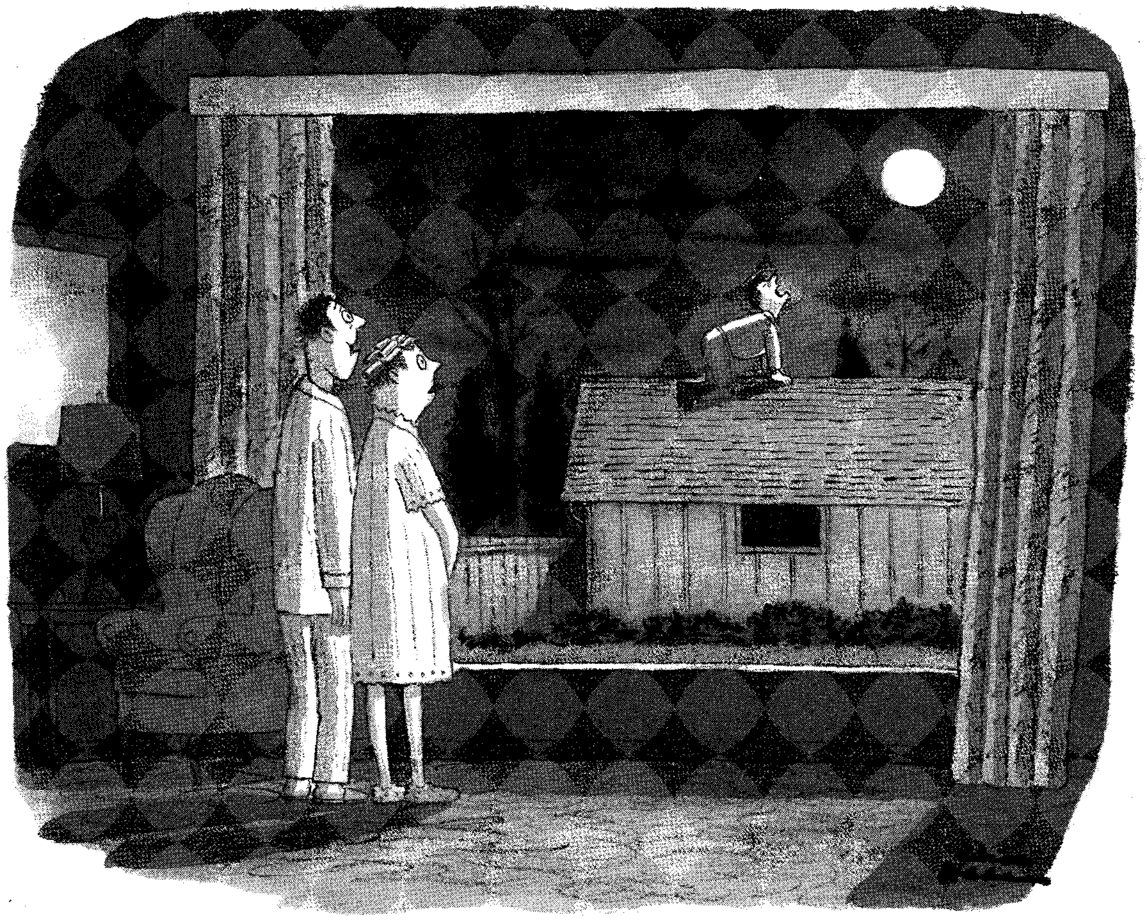
"He's your husband."

"I'm battered. Bruised," she declares. "Don't make me climb those stairs again."

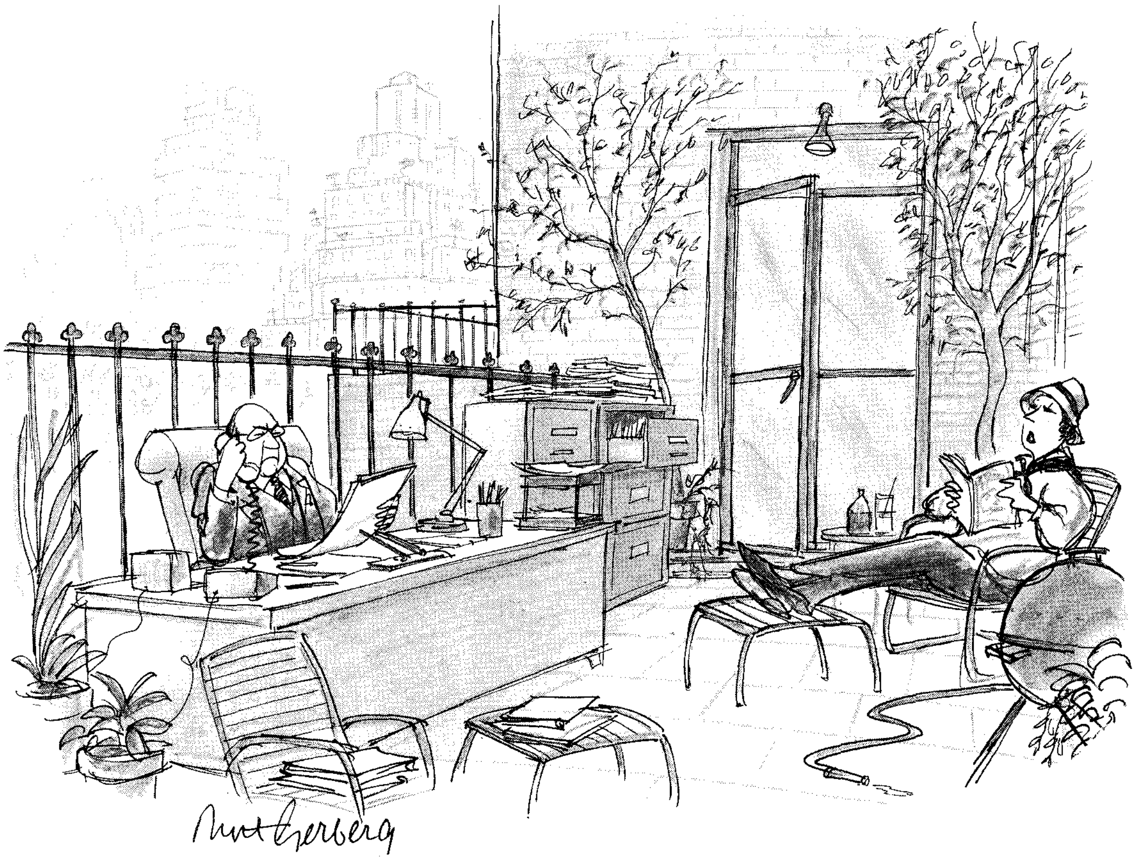
Angela comes in carrying a huge platter of fried chicken. "Go," she commands.

Baker climbs the stairs. They are too steep, the result of a miscalculation by the carpenters who added on the second floor. Angela complains about them. Since the offers have started to come in for the land, she finds little problems in the house more annoying.

Baker doesn't really want his brother to come down, though Angela is getting impatient at the snagged momentum of her meal. Once they all start to eat, the day



"*Pity Albert can't find a nice girl his own age.*"



"It just seems to me, Howard, that you're missing the whole point of having a terrace in the city."

moves irrevocably toward its sleepy end. The upstairs is cool; it will be chilly all winter, the overworked furnace never quite doing the job up there. Mack is in the bathroom, shaving.

"Whose razor?" Baker asks.

"I don't know. It needs a new blade."

"You're holding up dinner."

"I'm almost done," he says.

He has on clean bluejeans, no shirt, no shoes. His hair needs combing; half his face is lathered.

"You have fun today?" he asks, watching Baker in the mirror.

"This is always a nice day."

"How many tomato fights've we had?"

"Millions."

Mack rinses off the razor, touches the wet slickness of his jaw. "I always liked throwing at girls," he says. "I was scared to touch them otherwise."

"You were?"

"You, too."

"Not me."

"Now," Mack says, "every guy out there is throwing at my wife. That Donald kid. His dad. Clarence. Even my own son, throwing at his mom."

"Too Oedipal," Baker says.

"It's true."

"She's an inviting target," Baker says.

Mack laughs. He knows what Felice does to men. "Where did you go?" he asks. "To play the country squire?"

"I had business," Baker says. "It's Lath's big payday."

Angela's exasperated call comes from below, and Baker hollers back that they are on their way down.

"Don't dillydally," Baker says to his brother.

Mack wipes his face on a towel, leaves it in a pile on the sink. He takes his shirt from the bag Felice packed and pulls it on. "How much did you pay him?" he asks.

"Thirteen grand," Baker says.

"Thirteen grand," Mack muses. "A nice chunk. I bet he goes through it in three, four months."

"He's frugal," Baker says.

"A no-frills guy," Mack says. He is back at the mirror, parting his hair with Baker's comb.

"I'll see you downstairs."

"You going to sell?" Mack asks abruptly.

"I don't know. We should talk about it."

"How much money will we be talking about?"

"If we take the high offer, a million and a half apiece, roughly," Baker says. He waits at the bedroom door. His brother is putting on socks, a belt.

"We're starting without you!" Angela roars from downstairs.

"There's nothing to talk about," Mack says, passing his brother, descending.

Everyone is waiting for them. Angela gives them each a black look. Emily Dutcher has her sweater lifted surreptitiously, her baby at her breast. Mack kisses Felice on the neck and falls into his seat to Steph's right. He taps his daughter on the shoulder. "Hi, sharpshooter," he says.

Angela asks Baker to say grace. He stands behind his chair; heads bow over empty plates. Embarrassed, he races through a brief litany of gratitude for the people gathered, the food they are about to eat. He mumbles, "Amen," and then Angela chimes in, "But no tomatoes!"

"God bless tomatoes," Lathrop says, still praying.

BAKER stands with Angela at the end of the evening saying goodbye to their guests. As is traditional, she has set up a card table just outside the door, and Baker has carried jars of tomatoes up from the cellar and stacked them on the table. Everyone, even the children, must take tomatoes home. There are complaints about the weight of the jars, that they are slick and hard to hold, that nobody ever wants to see another tomato.

"Someday you'll be glad you have them," Angela says.

—CHARLES DICKINSON

ANNALS OF FINANCE

THE PRICE OF MONEY

I—TEMPLE SECRETS

On Monday, October 19, 1987, Americans witnessed a traumatic event that was beyond living experience for all but those who remembered 1929. The stock market on Wall Street, after a week of drastic declines, collapsed. The Dow Jones average of thirty industrial stocks fell five hundred and eight points, and financial wealth on the order of $500 billion was extinguished in a single day of trading. The following day, financial markets in Asia and Europe suffered similar debacles.

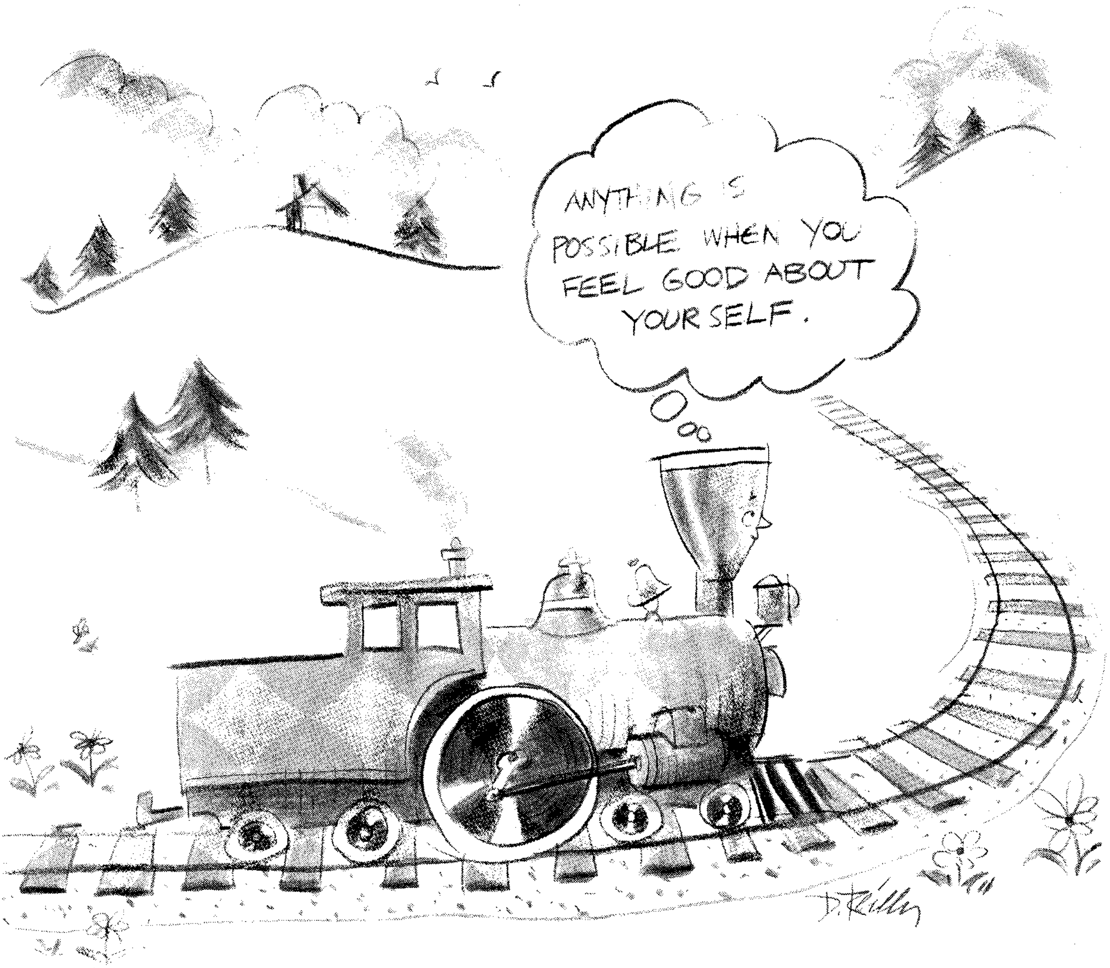
Just as in the aftermath of the crash of 1929, market analysts and media commentators searched for an explanation. Some blamed various transient events or recent pronouncements by public officials. Others argued that the collapse reflected the distorted social values of the era, particularly the heightened materialism associated with Wall Street finance. Still others attributed the crisis to government institutions in Washington.

Throughout this decade, a deep conflict has been going on between two of those institutions—the ones that, separately, manage the national economy. They have been pushing it in opposite directions. The public is familiar with one side—fiscal policy, and the endless political arguments between Congress and the President over taxation, spending, and budget deficits. The other side is remote and mysterious to most citizens—monetary policy, which is established by the Federal Reserve, the uniquely independent and extraordinarily powerful organization that is concerned with regulating the nation's economic life. The Federal Reserve—America's central bank—is probably the least known of our nation's significant institutions, but unless we achieve some grasp of the way it functions, and come to recognize the power it wields, we will neither understand the events that led to the current crisis nor be able to intelligently evaluate any measures proposed to resolve it.

In midsummer of 1979, Jimmy Carter, in the third year of his Presidency, was engulfed in popular discontent and declining authority. His stature had been diminished by a series of unhappy events, from failed legislation to revolution in Iran. Polls showed that barely a fourth of the voters approved of his performance as President. In early July, Carter set out to restore his popular support, and met with his closest advisers in private at Camp David. For ten days, the President deliberated there in near-isolation, conducting earnest seminars on what had gone wrong with the Carter Presidency—and, indeed, what had gone wrong with America itself. On Sunday, July 15th, the country gathered before its television sets to hear Carter's report. America faced a crisis of the soul, Carter declared—a testing of its moral and spiritual values. "The threat is nearly invisible in ordinary ways. It is a crisis of confidence. It is a crisis that strikes at the very heart and soul and spirit of our national will. We can see this crisis in the growing doubt about the meaning of our own lives and in the loss of a unity of purpose for our nation."

In reality, the source of America's political discontent was quite tangible. In the spring of 1979, after the upheaval in Iran interrupted its oil production, OPEC had seized the opportunity of temporary shortages to raise world petroleum prices again. After roughly quadrupling oil prices during its embargo of 1973-74, OPEC more than doubled them in 1978 and 1979. This second "oil shock," as economists called it, automatically led to price increases on nearly every product in every marketplace where Americans bought and sold. The latest oil shock, moreover, occurred at an especially bad time, when the inflation rate in the United States was already abnormally high. In the first three months of 1979, the government's index of consumer prices, covering food, housing, and other expenses, had risen at an annual rate of nearly thirteen per cent. Through the second quarter, as the OPEC price increases took hold, the inflation rate worsened, reaching fourteen per cent. By early summer, motorists in some regions were once again waiting in line at gas stations.

The President called on the country to sacrifice for the sake of spiritual renewal. He asked his audience to coöperate in self-denial, to forgo the excesses of material pleasures in the national interest. Carter's speech did not mention the Federal Reserve and its management of money—the government's handle on interest rates and credit expansion, by which Washington ultimately influences both prices and the pace of private economic activity. His stern message seemed especially odd coming from a Democratic President, the leader of the political party whose majority position was founded on the promise of prosperity for all. The news media quickly labelled it derisively "the malaise speech," though Carter himself had not used the word "malaise."


ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE WHEN YOU FEEL GOOD ABOUT YOURSELF.

The day after Carter's speech, the financial markets in New York expressed their reaction to his message. It was negative. The interest rate on short-term borrowing among banks rose abruptly, from 10.25 per cent to 10.75 per cent—fifty basis points, in market talk, which was a very sharp swing for a single day. The rate subsided only after the Federal Reserve took action to supply more money to the banking system. The interest on three-month Treasury bills, the government's own short-term borrowing, also went up sharply. Such small changes in the price of credit might not appear meaningful to outsiders, but to investors they were highly significant. A half of one per cent in a market rate would become the multiplier for tens of billions of dollars of other transactions. Such shifts were often interpreted, rightly or wrongly, as political messages, too.

The markets, it was said, wanted reassurance from the President—a promise that he would act decisively to curb the inflationary pressures. On Tuesday, Carter took action to demonstrate his resolve: he asked for resignations from his entire Cabinet and senior White House staff. Each top-level appointment would be reviewed, and the President would decide "expeditiously" which appointees to keep and which to dismiss. This was meant to signal a new beginning for the Carter Presidency—a dramatic shakeup that would show he was in charge.

The financial markets drew the opposite conclusion. They were further rattled, both at home and abroad. On Wednesday, the dollar declined, and the price of gold, which was considered a hedge against inflation, reached a record in European markets—above three hundred dollars an ounce. On Thursday, Carter announced wholesale changes in his Cabinet, including the resignation of W. Michael Blumenthal, his Secretary of the Treasury. G. William Miller, the chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, would leave that post and replace Blumenthal.

As Wall Street wondered who Miller's replacement at the Fed would be, the daily financial numbers got worse. By Friday, Carter had created another problem for himself: finding a new chairman for the Federal Reserve—one who would calm the financial markets. By the weekend, the White House was hearing from a wide array of political counsellors and friendly business executives, all of whom amplified the daily messages from the financial markets. The President would be gravely damaged if he did not quickly appoint a new chairman for the Fed—a chairman whom Wall Street trusted. "It became obvious that we had to quell the nervousness of the markets," a Carter adviser said later.

INEVITABLY, political tension exists between Wall Street and Washington. They are separate capitals, in a sense, representing two different sources of power in American society. "Washington doesn't understand interest rates, and Wall Street doesn't understand Washington," Stuart Eizenstat, the director of Carter's domestic-policy staff, observed. "That two-hundred-mile gap is like a giant chasm."

Unlike any other institution of government, the Federal Reserve System is positioned midway between these two worlds, and is obliged to listen to both power centers—the demands of private finance from Wall Street, the democratic ambitions expressed in Washington. Every important decision by the Fed alters the rewards in both domains—the return on invest-

"I don't know what's wrong with me today. I just can't seem to opt."

• •

ments, and the broad vitality of the American economy, upon which political fortunes depend. The capital of finance has understood this relationship much better than the capital of government has, and because many people in Washington do not truly grasp Wall Street's function in the American system they cannot understand the Federal Reserve's, either. Among bankers and brokers, the Fed has been regarded as another of life's large uncertainties, a force in the marketplace capable of embarrassing even the largest players.

The essence of Wall Street is an exchange across time—transactions between the past and the future. Old money, the surplus accumulated from past ventures, is lent to those who need it for future enterprises. For all the daunting complexities of financial markets, what Wall Street does is as simple as that. It is the intermediary, the meeting place where past and future agree on terms and the money changes hands. Despite enduring folk prejudices against bankers and financiers, American enterprise could not function without this exchange. Every day on Wall Street, banks and brokerages collect idle billions from those who have accumulated a surplus and redirect the money—for a price, of course—to those who need use of it: a retail chain buying inventory for its stores, a local government constructing sewers, consumers buying houses, business corporations financing new production.

The largest commercial banks—Citibank, Morgan Guaranty, Chase Manhattan, and the others—are the titans in this world, routinely lending billions to businesses at home and abroad. They are surrounded by hundreds of trading firms and brokerages and rivalled in influence only by the largest investment-banking houses—Salomon Brothers, Merrill Lynch, and the rest. Investment bankers are the aristocrats, and they perform what is arguably Wall Street's most important function—capital formation—raising funds through bonds or stock issues to finance new factories or retool old ones, to build highways, schools, and hospitals. The pace of capital formation determines what the distant future will look like for the economy at large.

Considering its influence on the lives of all Americans, the universe of Wall Street professionals is extraordinarily small. In 1981, when Dow Jones, the publisher of the *Wall Street Journal*, commissioned a census of "finance professionals" in the United States—people who managed financing for corporations and individuals; stockbrokers; securities analysts; bond underwriters; company treasurers; free-lance money managers; and the rest—their number came to only about four hundred thousand. This select group was growing rapidly, however—it had become thirty-five per cent larger in just the previous five years. Not all the professionals worked in lower Manhattan, but, practically speaking, they were all members of the same community, connected by telephone and telex to the same markets and sharing in the same daily transactions. As the newspaper's survey quietly noted, ninety-three per cent of them were regular readers of the *Wall Street Journal*.

The market participants, the lenders and borrowers who are the buyers and sellers of financial instruments, operate in three great arenas of finance—the stock market, the bond market, and the so-called money market. Strictly speaking, the stock market does not involve credit, because a stockholder is buying a fractional share of ownership in a corporation. But, typically, investors scan all three markets, compare the potential returns in each, and move their money from one to another as the prospects guide them. In theory, the stock market lives by the outlook for rising corporate profits, and its natural optimism is depressed whenever downturns in the business cycle wipe out earlier predictions of company sales and earnings.

The bond market, by comparison, is dour and conservative, yearning above all for long-term stability, and is often frightened by go-go news that excites the stock market. The bond market deals in long-term corporate and government debt issues—bonds and notes normally ranging from two years to thirty years. This is the place where people lend their money to the distant future, and it is therefore the arena that worries most about the threat of inflation. A cautious investor who bought blue-chip corporate bonds

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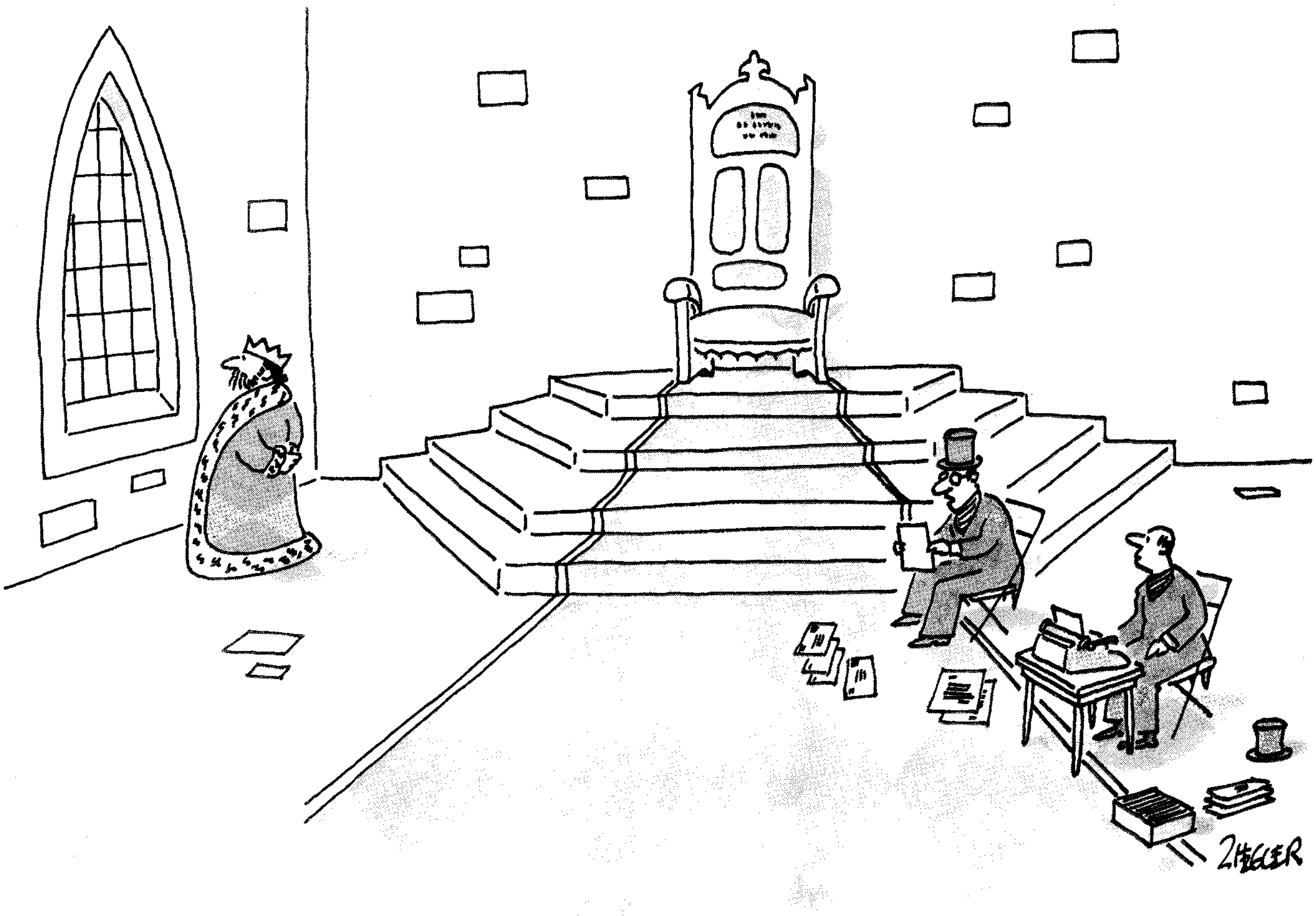


"Here's a letter from a housewife in the southern tier of the kingdom. She writes: 'Sire, would it or would it not be appropriate to use a sand-finish latex paint on a wall on which there remains some painted-over wallpaper? Respectfully, Mrs. R. Jones.'"

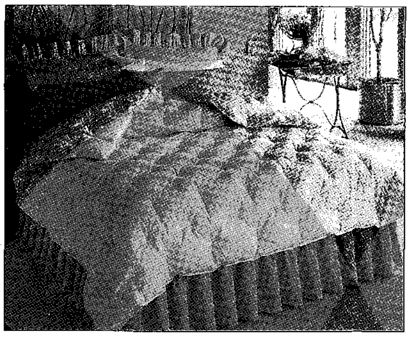
• •

in 1965, for instance, would have been promised a steady, safe annual return of perhaps four or five per cent on his money. By 1979, the promise was grotesquely undermined by inflation: his wealth was losing value from inflation much faster than it was generating income. The disappointed investor could sell his bonds and invest somewhere else, but he would have to sell at a depressed price.

The money market is, in a sense, the near end of the credit horizon: the short-term borrowing that could be an overnight loan or a loan for a few weeks or months—anything less than two years. The money market, unlike the markets in stocks and bonds, exists nowhere and everywhere. The trading is done mostly by telephone, telex, and computer, and involves a bewildering variety of lending instruments, from electronic swaps of excess reserves among banks, through commercial paper issued by corporations, to the hundred-thousand-dollar certificates of deposit by which banks raise funds to lend out again. Money-market rates react the most sensitively of all to small changes in supply and demand, and become a haven from inflation, a place to hide when long-term investments seem too risky.

Although the news media tend to treat the stock market as the most important enterprise on Wall Street—the barometer of financial news—it is actually dwarfed by the credit markets. The year-end market value of all corporate equities in 1979 was about $1.2 trillion—compared with $4.2 trillion in the credit markets. Most of the latter sum was dedicated to long-term debt, from mortgages to corporate bonds, but even the short-term lending in the money market was about equal in volume to the total value of corporate stocks.

Across the three great financial markets, money flows continuously, in and out of different channels, from one instrument to another, from lenders to debtors and back again. In this intricate tangle of credit relationships, one customer stands ahead of all the others. The largest borrower in the markets of Wall Street is the government in Washington: in 1979, the federal debt, of nearly $900 billion, took the form of government securities, from ninety-day Treasury bills, through two-year notes, to long-term bonds that would mature in 2009. In one sense, Treasuries are the safest investment available; after all, if someday the United States government failed to pay its obligations the country would no doubt be in riotous anarchy anyway, and no private property would be safe. In another sense, however, government securities confront investors with the same risk as other



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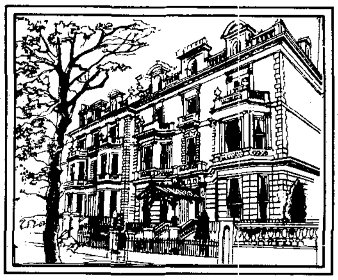
long-term issues—the risk that the dollar will lose its value. The price of United States bonds, new and old, is therefore highly sensitive to the prospects of future inflation.

The financial system, usually portrayed as a static balance sheet, actually is dynamic, like a pump house, and functions according to physical laws that a hydraulic engineer might understand. It is like a fantastic labyrinth of pipes, storage tanks, and pressure valves. Inside this system flows the financial wealth of the nation, back and forth through many channels and tanks, always seeking higher return and less risk, searching out the enterprises that best promise both. Indeed, financial analysts themselves use hydraulic metaphors: the "liquidity" of banks, the "flow of funds" analysis, "circulation" and "float" and "velocity," the "surge and ebb" of market pressures.

The Federal Reserve Board stands alongside the system like a supervising engineer who has the power to alter the flows inside the plumbing. Its decisions can slacken the pressures of the fluids or intensify them; its policies can stimulate the flow of lending or choke it off or nudge it toward different channels. The Fed accomplishes these things primarily by injecting more fluid into the system or withdrawing fluid—that is, by creating or destroying money. (Traditionally, the ability to create money was the power of sovereigns. Central banks inherited the power from kings and, before them, the temple priests of ancient civilizations, leaders endowed by God with the authority to consecrate by fiat the currency that their societies would accept and use.)

The Federal Reserve System can also be seen as operating like a modern equivalent of the king's keep—a separate storehouse alongside the private economy and independent of its forces. But the Fed can influence the financial flows inside the plumbing through two tiny valves—almost minuscule compared with all the wealth in circulation. One valve is the Discount window at each of the twelve Federal Reserve Banks, where commercial banks routinely borrow hundreds of millions, even billions, every day to make up for temporary shortages in their required reserves. The other, and more important, valve is the Open Market Desk at the New York Federal Reserve Bank, where the Fed buys and sells government securities on the open market, in daily transactions



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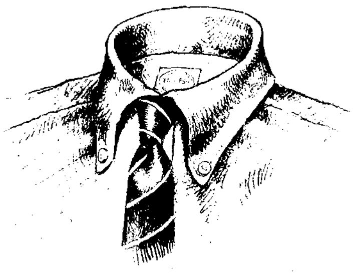

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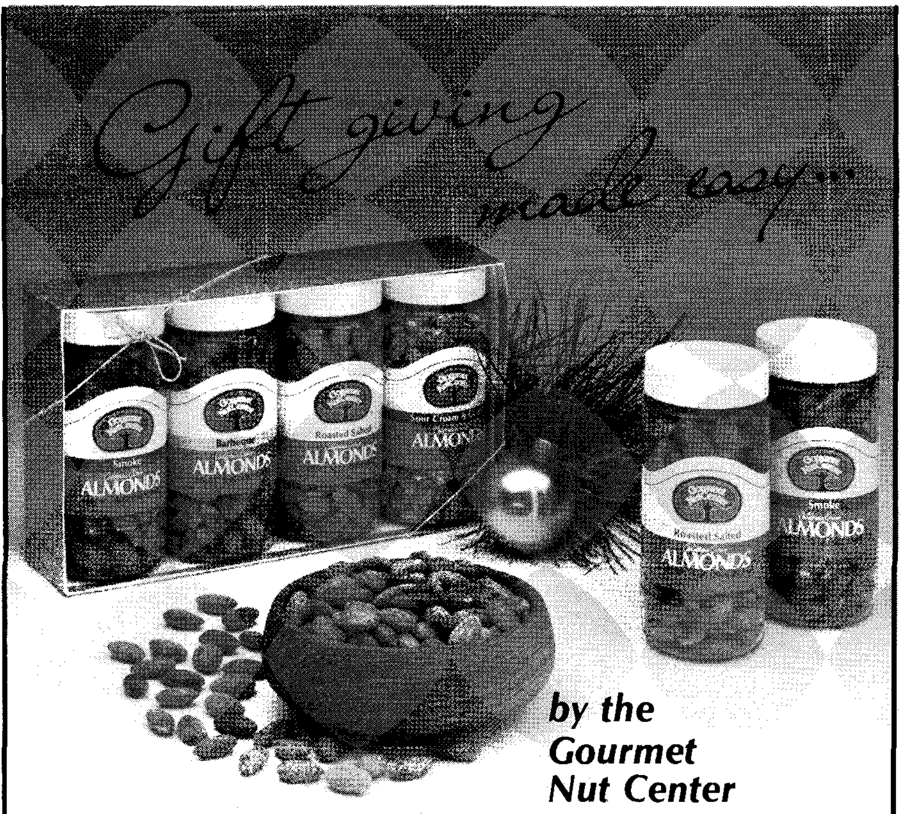
usually running from five hundred million dollars up to several billion. In either case, the Fed creates money with a keystroke at the computer terminal. When the Federal Reserve buys Treasury securities from a private dealer or lends through the Discount window to a commercial bank, the Fed simply credits the amount to the bank account of the dealer who sold the securities or to the bank receiving the loan. In either case, it does not matter which dealer or which bank gets the new money. Once the money has been created, it increases the over-all money supply and is free to flow from one account to another through the entire banking system. In reverse, when the Fed's Open Market Desk sells securities or a commercial bank repays its Discount loan, money is extinguished by the Fed. By a simple entry in the ledger, the money is automatically withdrawn from circulation in the private economy.

Day by day, the Federal Reserve exerts a powerful influence on Wall Street, but it is not all-powerful. It influences everything, but it does not control everything. It can set dials and turn valves, but it cannot repeal the fundamentals of economics, any more than an engineer can suspend the laws of physics. Sometimes, despite the actions of the Fed, markets pursue their own direction, driven by contrary perceptions or else by real economic forces that prove to be beyond the Fed's control. Sometimes the Fed, in trying to change the flow, opens the wrong valve and produces unintended results. Sometimes it opens the valve and nothing seems to happen.

Wall Street, therefore, watches the Fed. Every bank and brokerage of any size has full-time economists—"Fed watchers"—who do nothing else. The scores of Fed watchers analyze the weekly banking numbers, the credit trends, and the general economic news, and try to predict Fed decisions ahead of the crowd. They make daily forecasts of the sales and purchases they expect the Open Market Desk to make, and, more important, they attempt to foresee the major "turns" in Fed policy—easing or tightening the money supply and credit conditions. A significant change in direction would send large ripples across the three great financial markets, through the banking system, and, ultimately, into the real economy of producers and consumers.

Of the three great financial arenas, the money market reacts first to Fed moves. Short-term credit rates rise or



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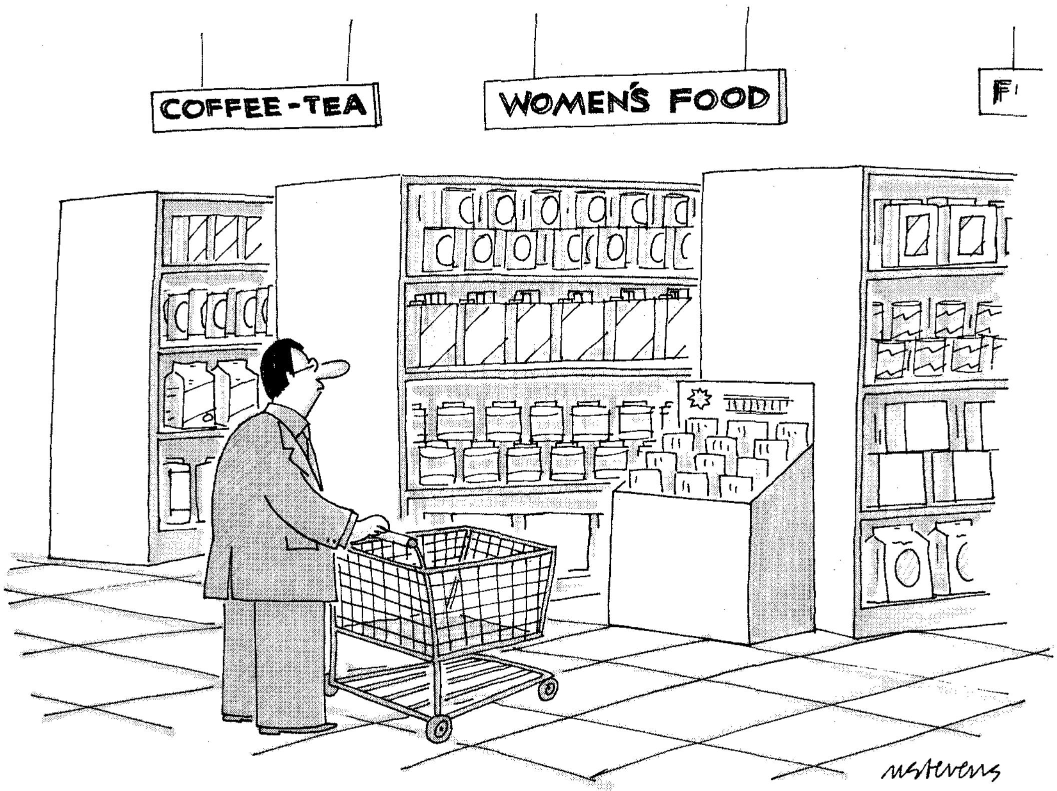

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fall almost instantly in reaction to even a small change in the money supply, and the Fed's strongest, most direct control is over this market. In the stock market, a Fed turn can launch a major rally or squelch it, but transient gyrations in the stock market do not much worry the Fed. The financial market that the Federal Reserve cares about most, respects, and even identifies with, is the bond market, and it is the bond market that judges Federal Reserve policy most severely and reacts most harshly to errors or transgressions. In midsummer of 1979, engulfed by double-digit inflation, the bond market was widely described as moribund.

THE television commercials sponsored by major firms like Merrill Lynch or E. F. Hutton in the late seventies encouraged the impression that Wall Street investing was a common practice among American households. In fact, brokerage advertising was usually targeted at potential investors among the most affluent audiences, particularly upper-income males who favored sports broadcasts like tennis or golf tournaments. "It's not all sports we want," the advertising director of Paine Webber has explained. "I can't imagine us ever advertising on a bowling tournament—not that I have anything against bowling or the people who watch it."

The question of who owned financial wealth—or who did not—was the buried fault line of American politics. The wealth holders whose money circulated through Wall Street markets were an atypical minority of Americans, with economic interests that differed strongly from those of the majority. The distribution of wealth, even though it was seldom a subject of political discussions, was the subtext of nearly every important economic question that faced the government; it was the fulcrum on which the most basic political questions pivoted. In the nature of things, government might choose to enhance the economic prospects for the many or to safeguard the accumulated wealth held by the few; frequently, the two purposes were irreconcilable. The Federal Reserve served as mediating agent in this enduring conflict. On occasion, it assumed the power of independent arbiter, deciding on its own whom the government would favor, and enforcing its decisions through its control of money and interest rates. This crucial political role was one implicit reason that the Federal Reserve was insulated from public view and popular elections—to protect it from the will of the majority.

In 1979, most American families did not own stocks or bonds, or even have money-market accounts. A majority of the people were borrowers, not lenders. Their net financial worth was zero or negative. American capitalism had been powerfully creative in the first three-quarters of the twentieth century, generating new jobs and products, expanding wages, distributing prosperity widely through the society. But the system did not distribute the ownership of financial wealth very broadly. American families, on the average, had $24,100 in financial assets, according to a survey of consumer finances conducted in 1983 by the Federal Reserve Board. But this was an instance in which the term "average" was grossly misleading, for it was distorted by the concentrated wealth in the upper half. The *median* was only $2,300; that is, precisely half of all American families had financial assets, including checking accounts and savings deposits, that totalled less than $2,300. More than a fourth of all families had financial assets of less than a thousand dollars, and twelve per cent had none.

Nor was that the whole story. Those figures overstated the financial status of ordinary American families, because nearly all of them were also debtors. They held cash in a checking account or a modest savings deposit, but their outstanding loans were often larger than these small accumulations. The survey looked at all the financial assets held by individuals (as opposed to institutions) and calculated the net financial worth (not including real estate) of American families—their assets minus their debts. It reported the lopsided distribution in straightforward terms: eighty-six per cent of the net financial worth was held by ten per cent of America's families; the remaining fourteen per cent of the nation's financial assets was held by thirty-five per cent of the families; and below them were the majority, fifty-five per cent of all American families, who, on balance, had accumulated

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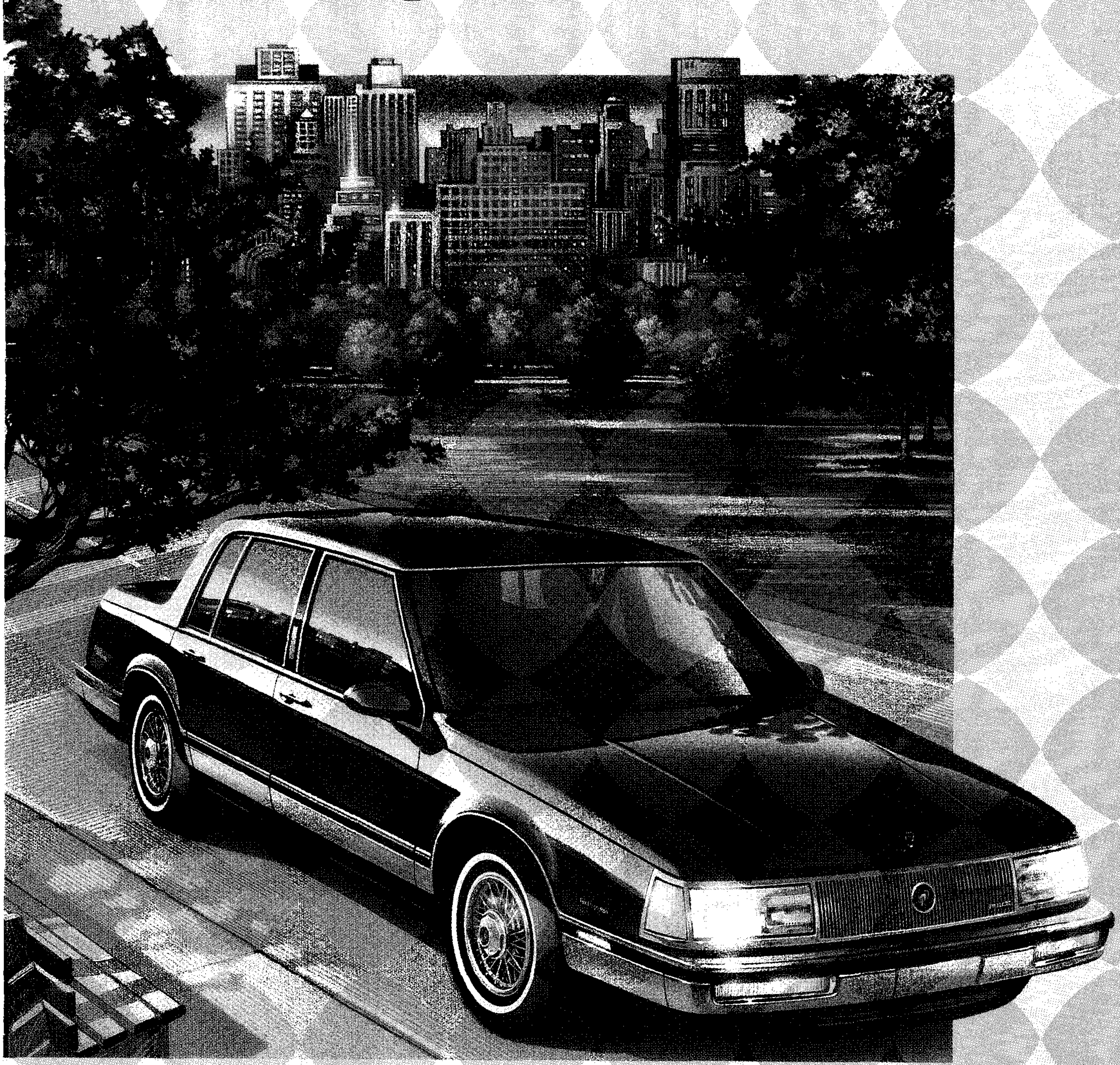

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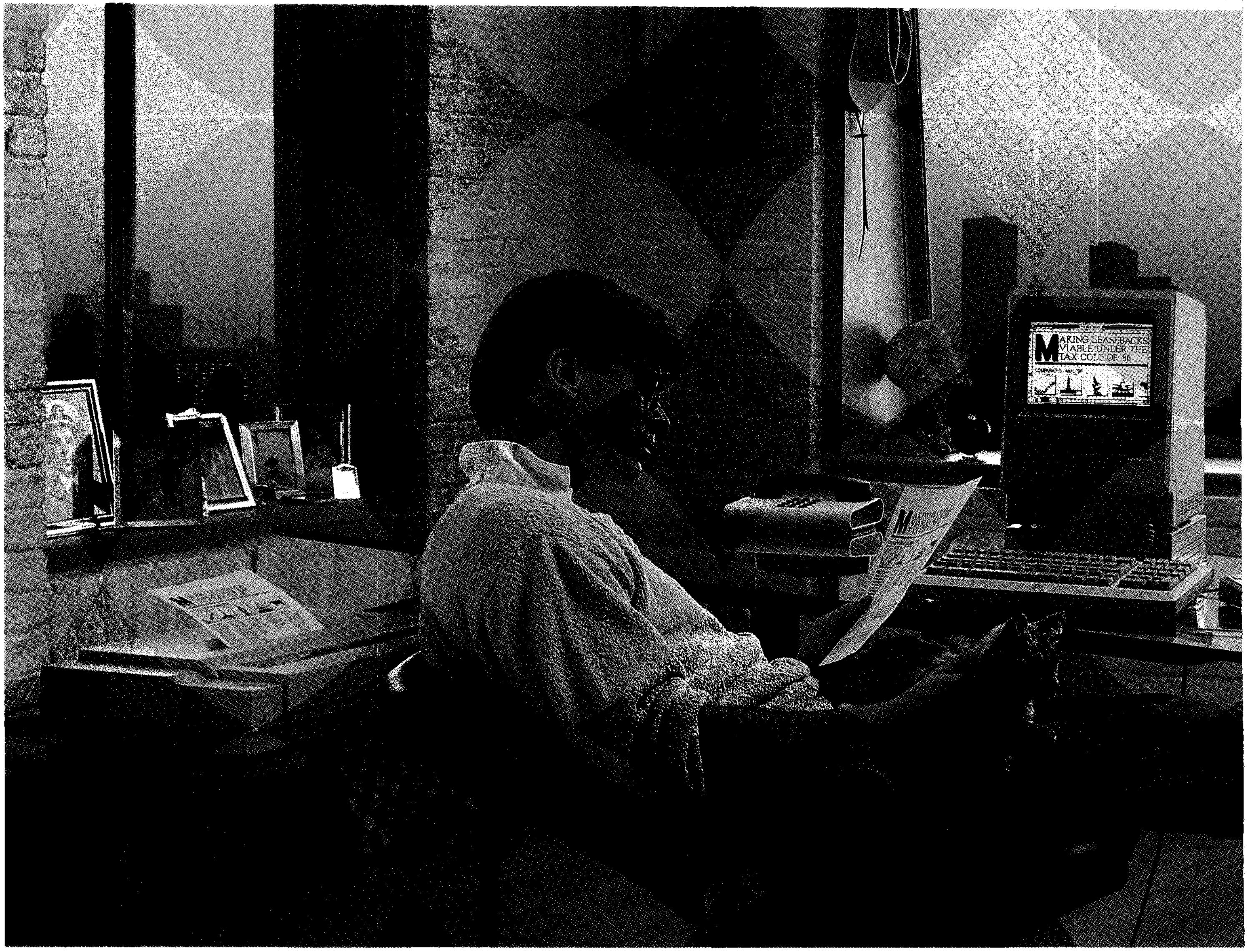
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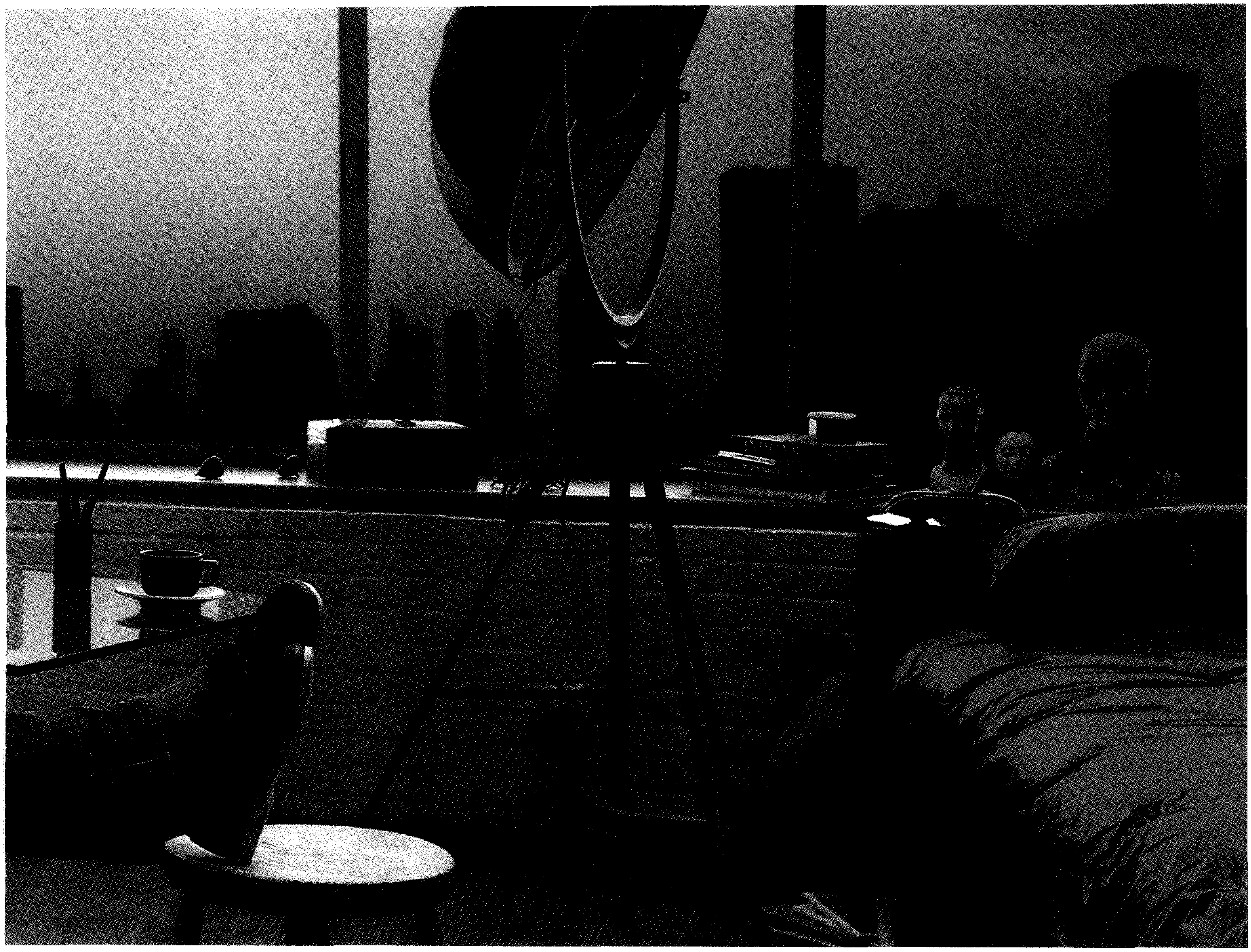

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nothing. Most of them were net debtors.

The highest ten per cent and, to a lesser degree, the larger group just below them were the main customers for Wall Street investments. Their net financial worth amounted to about $1.6 trillion. The top two per cent of the families owned thirty per cent of all liquid assets—everything from checking and savings accounts to money-market funds and bank C.D.s. They also owned fifty per cent of the corporate stocks held by individuals, thirty-nine per cent of all corporate and government bonds, seventy-one per cent of the tax-exempt municipals, and twenty per cent of all the real estate. The top ten per cent owned fifty-one per cent of the short-term financial paper, seventy-two per cent of the corporate stocks, seventy per cent of the bonds, eighty-six per cent of the tax-exempt municipals, and fifty per cent of all the real property.

Individual investors constituted less than half of the market, however. Alongside them stood the institutional investors—corporations, banks, insurance companies, pension funds, foundations, and university endowments—which owned or managed huge amounts of wealth on their own. Individuals, of course, indirectly owned most of the wealth stored in these institutions, since individuals directly owned seventy-three per cent of all corporate stocks and mutual-fund shares, including ownership of bank holding companies, insurance companies, and other financial institutions. Pensions and life insurance were indirect forms of personal savings, too, and were distributed much more equitably among American families than stocks and bonds were.

All investors, large and small, personal and institutional, were united by the fear that inflation would erode their wealth. In the stock market, for instance, the Dow Jones average of thirty industrial stocks was trading around 900 in the late summer of 1979—no higher than the level it had reached ten years earlier—but nine hundred dollars was worth a lot less now: an investor who had bought a portfolio based on the Dow Jones average in 1969 and held on to it for ten years would have lost about half the value of his money.

Since inflation had devastated returns in the bond market, investors were forced to tilt toward short-term commitments of their money, where interest rates responded more sensi-

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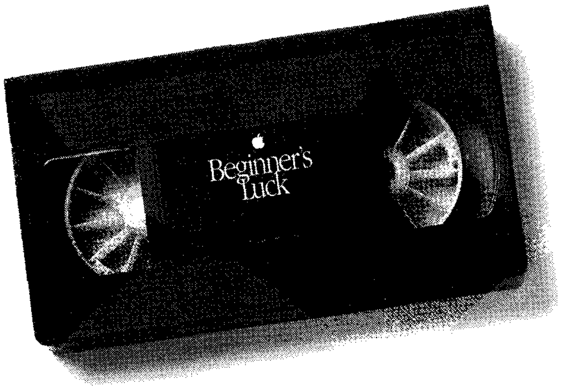

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tively to changes in inflation, and where they could retrieve their assets quickly if necessary. Even the money market was treacherous, however. Sophisticated investors considered not just the nominal interest rate offered by an investment but the so-called real interest rate—interest minus current inflation. In 1979, the real interest rate on three-month T-bills—a standard barometer of short-term credit—was minus 1.2 per cent.

To the owners of wealth, this exchange looked like a form of fraud. Those who believed, as most of them did, that the government in Washington was ultimately responsible for causing inflation felt that the government was stealthily robbing them of their savings. The only remedy for their distress would come from political pressure to change the government's economic policies and restore the stability of money.

The grievances of investors, however, collided with an opposing reality of inflation—a paradox of winners and losers. While the few suffered losses, the many made real gains. Rising prices frightened everyone, but inflation actually improved the financial status of large classes of ordinary Americans—probably the majority of them. Inflation particularly benefitted the broad middle class of families who owned their own homes and depended for their income on wages, rather than on interest and dividends from financial assets. This consequence was familiar to many economists but not to most ordinary citizens, including many of those whose personal balance sheets were improved by inflation.

In a comprehensive study of how inflation in the late nineteen-seventies affected the incomes, wealth, and tax burdens of four groups of citizens, the economist Joseph J. Minarik, of the Brookings Institution, concluded, "The average middle-income homeowner is the big winner in inflation. His labor income keeps up with prices, his home appreciates in real terms, and his home mortgage payment does not increase at all. The Federal income tax becomes somewhat more onerous, but this effect is far outweighed by the benefits of homeownership. The average middle-income home renter does not fare as well, but overall he nearly keeps up with inflation." By contrast, Minarik found that upper-income households—a category then defined as those above $37,500 in income, who constituted approximately the top ten per cent on the income ladder—were

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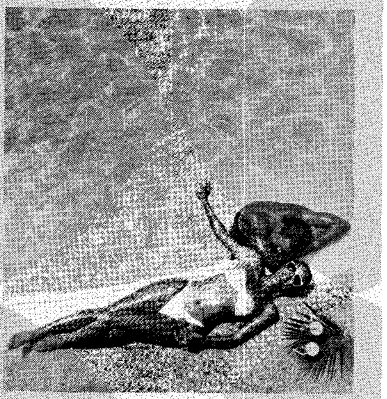

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"left substantially worse off." Their salaries, too, kept pace with inflation, but their financial assets were eroded. "The wealthy have no safe and profitable store of value in times of inflation," he explained.

A similar study by Edward N. Wolff, an economist at New York University, measured the impact on wealth of the first sharp run-up of the modern inflationary surge, starting in 1969 and ending with the recession of 1974. During that period, Wolff reported, "Inflation acted like a progressive tax, leading to greater equality in the distribution of wealth."

Minarik found that inflation's effect on two other groups—the poor and the elderly—was more ambiguous but also more benign than popular political opinion assumed. It was believed that these two groups suffered the most severely from inflation, because they lived on fixed incomes. Minarik concluded that this was not true. Wages and, with a lag, government benefit programs for families with low incomes generally increased to keep up with prices. In two sectors where prices were soaring—health and housing—many poor people were sheltered from rising costs by Medicaid and public housing. The poor were still poor, of course, but inflation did not make them worse off compared with others.

The elderly were partly protected, too. Social Security, being indexed to the inflation rate, automatically increased their monthly checks periodically to catch up with prices. Among the elderly damaged by inflation, Minarik found, "those who rely most heavily on private pensions or on their own savings" were hurt the most. "The notion of the Social Security recipient as the chief loser in inflation is largely incorrect," he said.

The principal explanation for this reversal of fortunes—the many gaining at the expense of the few—was homeownership. Most American families—two-thirds of them—owned only one real asset of any significance: a home. During inflation, it was the best investment available. It did not, of course, pay annual interest or dividends, like bonds or stocks, but the value of homes, on the average, increased with inflation, and, in most places, appreciated faster than the general price level. Meanwhile, the family was borrowing heavily through a long-term mortgage in order to own the home, and for debtors inflation was a winning transaction.

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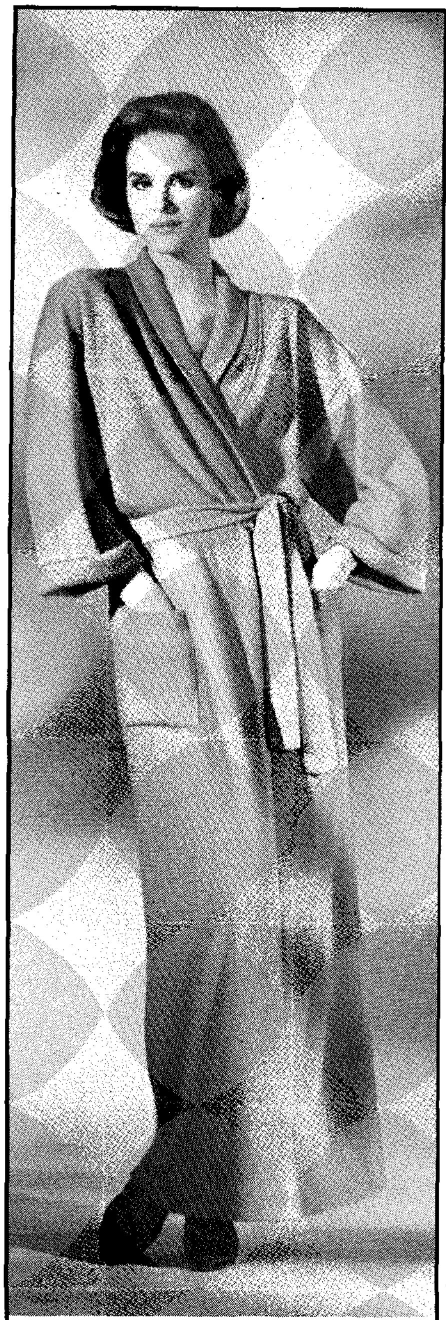

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was one of the federal government's fundamental social policies, and one of its most effective programs. The tax deductions for mortgage interest and property taxes, dating from the New Deal, stimulated millions of transactions in which families bought homes they could not have afforded otherwise. Since the Depression, homeownership had steadily expanded, from forty-four per cent to sixty-six per cent of all families. The government subsidy for housing, in fact, was the only significant program that enabled ordinary families to contract large debts and accumulate real assets. It worked. When equity in homes was added to the family balance sheet alongside financial assets, the median family's net worth in 1983 was $24,500. People could not spend that wealth, of course, but they could borrow against it, or save it for their old age, or pass it on to their children. Debt, in other words, could work to broaden the distribution of wealth. In times of high inflation, it worked better.

The wealth redistributed by inflation flowed in many directions, but one of the main channels was across the generations—from the old to the young. Shrinking the real burden of debt assisted young families most directly, for younger people, starting out with little or no savings, naturally relied most heavily on borrowing to make the basic purchases of family life—homes, cars, appliances. Their gain was older Americans' loss—at least, a loss for those older Americans who had amassed savings and lent their money to others.

A social philosopher searching for a progressive theory of justice might contemplate the underlying consequences of inflation and conclude that this system was a promising model for social equity. Inflation, after all, discreetly redistributed wealth from creditors to debtors. Furthermore, liberal economists like Minarik warned that for many citizens the orthodox remedy for inflation—a severe economic contraction that increased unemployment—would be a harmful exchange. For the poor, in particular, he noted, a recession "amputates the hand to relieve the hangnail."

Despite all this, however, millions of workers did not receive wage increases that kept up with prices, and, as Minarik conceded, even middle-class citizens who benefitted from inflation did not seem to appreciate the fact. Rising incomes pushed average

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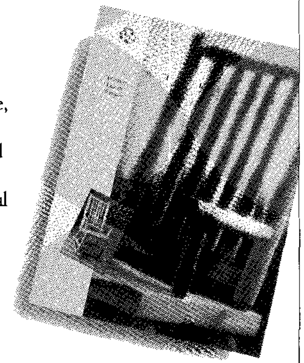

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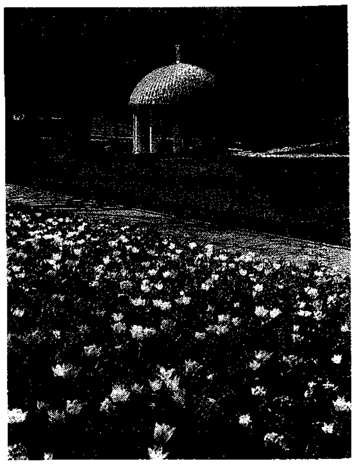

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working families into higher brackets of the federal income tax. Minarik found that while the expanding value of their homes more than offset the higher taxes, they still resented the increase. Rapidly rising prices and debt allowed millions of middle-class families to acquire more real goods, but runaway inflation frightened them. In any case, politicians did not often hear from voters who were celebrating inflation's egalitarian effects.

Perhaps most important, the investors were in revolt. The owners of capital could hardly be expected to accept passively the steady loss of their property. They resisted by refusing to commit their wealth to long-term ventures, and thus the process of capital formation that was fundamental to future economic prosperity was undermined. They moved their money out of financial investments and sought havens in real assets, such as gold, real estate, antiques, art—anything tangible that might increase its price faster than the dollar lost its value. Finally, investors, though they were a minority of voters, had political influence far out of proportion to their numbers. The government, they demanded emphatically, must do something to stop inflation.

ON the afternoon of July 22, 1979—a Sunday—Richard Moe, the chief of staff for Vice-President Walter Mondale, was at work in the White House, making dozens of telephone calls all over the country. A week had elapsed since President Carter's speech to the nation, and Moe had been assigned to deal with the President's new problem—checking potential candidates for the chairmanship of the Federal Reserve Board. The list started with eight or nine names but was quickly winnowed down to three or four. As Moe proceeded, one name came up again and again—Paul Volcker.

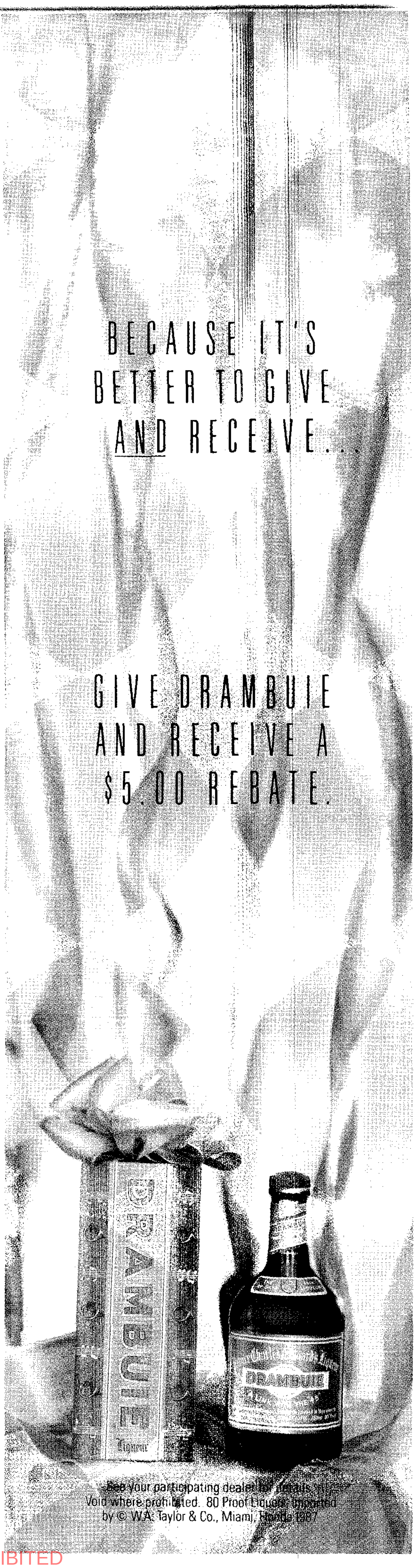
Volcker's résumé was impressive—especially compared with that of G. William Miller, the man who was leaving the Fed chairmanship to become Treasury Secretary. Unlike Miller, an industrial executive, Volcker was an economist who had devoted his entire career to money issues, from banking to the complexities of international finance. For the previous four years, Volcker had served as president of the New York Federal Reserve Bank, which was the most important of the twelve district banks in the system, because it served Wall Street. Its president was naturally intimate with the largest financial institutions, including the central banks of other nations. Before assuming that post, Volcker had served in the Nixon Treasury Department as Under-Secretary for Monetary Affairs—the executive-branch official who worked most closely with the Fed. Earlier, he had held deputy posts at Treasury under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, and had served two tours in private banking, at Chase Manhattan. And he had even started his career at the Fed, "crunching numbers" as a young research economist at the New York Fed and then trading with dealers on the Open Market Desk.

Moe telephoned about fifty people and asked for their confidential assessments of the leading candidates. His survey covered other officials in the Administration, business executives and lawyers who were close to the Carter White House, academic economists, a labor leader; he summarized their comments in a briefing book, which he was to deliver to the President that evening. Most reactions to Volcker's name were enthusiastic, but some were quite critical.

Moe reported in the memorandum to the President that Volcker was seen as being able to give the White House what it desperately wanted—quick reassurances for Wall Street. On the other hand, Moe was concerned by the thread of adverse comments that ran through the conversations: "rigidly conservative," "very right-wing," "arbitrary and arrogant," and "not a team player."

"The only real negative that showed up on Volcker was the question of whether he was going to be a team player, like Bill Miller," Moe recalled. "Nobody ever questioned his intellectual credentials. People knew that he was a very conservative fellow, but that never dissuaded the President on appointments anyway. The only question was whether he could work with the White House the way Bill Miller had. Miller was very close to the White House on monetary policy. That's the way any White House wants it. What people said about Volcker set off alarm bells: 'He's a very strong-willed, strong-minded person who may or may not be prepared to coördinate policy with you.' "

Moe decided to share his doubts with the President and suggest that Carter choose one of the other candidates. On Monday morning, the news from the financial markets continued



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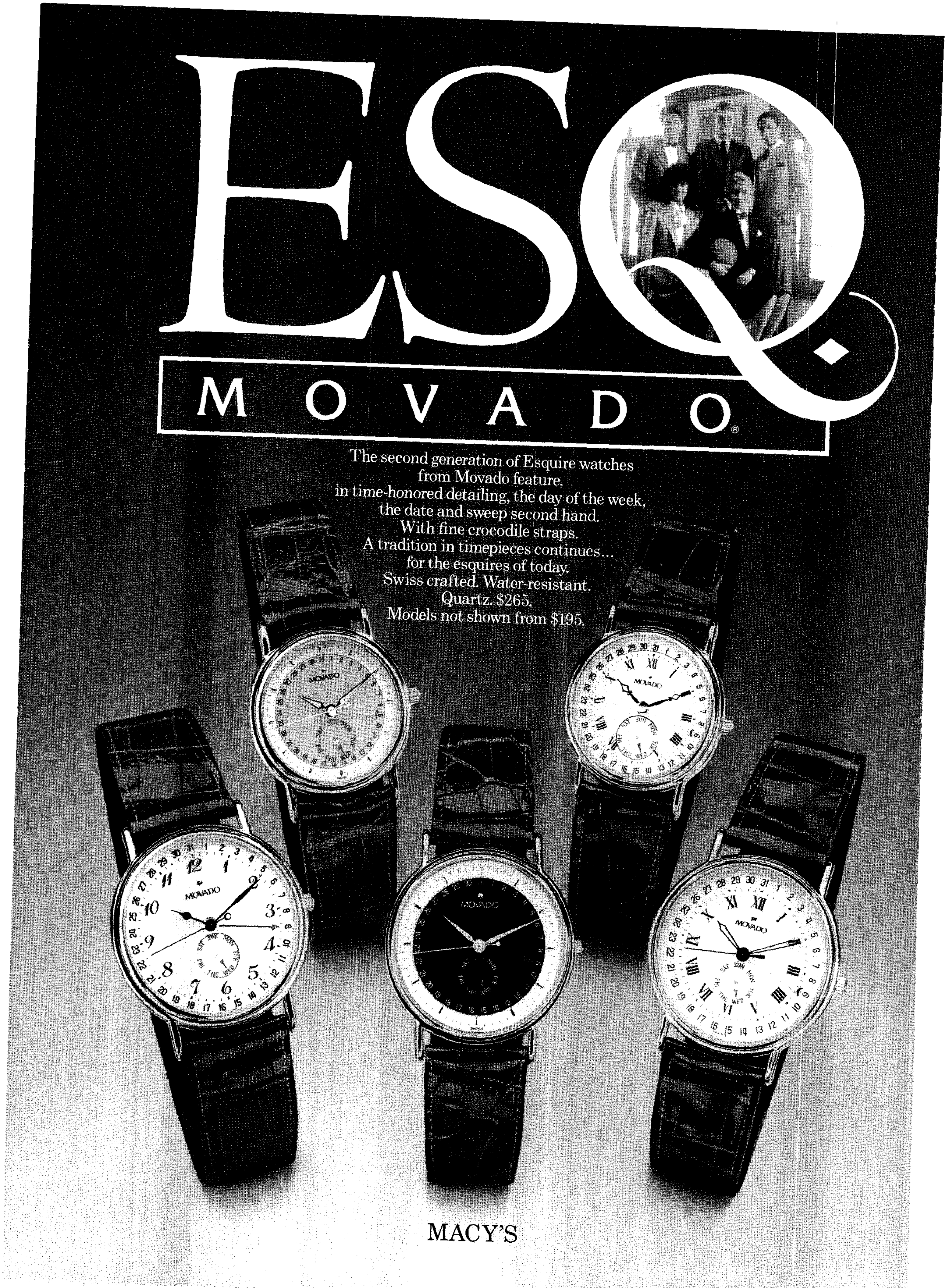

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to be alarming: gold reached $305 an ounce; the dollar continued to fall. "I was informed that the decision was moving clearly toward Volcker," Moe later said. "I had enough doubt in my own mind about this one question about him that I decided to go in and see the President. I thought he should consider Tom Clausen—talk to him personally and see if he was available." A. W. Clausen was the president and chief executive officer of the Bank of America. "If he thought Clausen was as good as or better than Volcker, he ought to talk with him. The President was very attentive to that."

Carter telephoned Clausen, in San Francisco. Would he be interested in becoming chairman of the Federal Reserve? The banker consulted his wife about moving to Washington and came back on the phone to say that he wouldn't be. After that conversation, the President's choice seemed inevitable.

On July 24th, Paul Volcker was summoned to the White House for an interview with the President. Volcker was imposingly tall—six feet seven inches, nearly a foot taller than Jimmy Carter—but he did not use his great height to intimidate others, as some large men do. At fifty-one, he was rumpled and graying, and his posture was slightly stooped, like that of an awkward center on a high-school basketball team who is used to being surrounded by shorter people.

Volcker apparently did most of the talking. Wall Street gossips reported later that Volcker warned Jimmy Carter that if he was appointed he would be totally independent of the White House. That was not quite accurate. Volcker did deliver a standard speech on the importance of the Federal Reserve System's independence, and Carter assented. Volcker also elaborated on the reasons the Federal Reserve's money policy should be tightened. On that, the President neither agreed nor disagreed.

The appointment was announced the next day, subject to Senate confirmation, and the financial markets applauded. The Dow Jones stock average rose nearly ten points. The bond market rallied. After months of decline, the dollar abruptly improved on international markets. The price of gold fell two dollars and fifty cents an ounce.

Few people in the White House recognized what would become obvious in the next few years—that this was the most important appointment of

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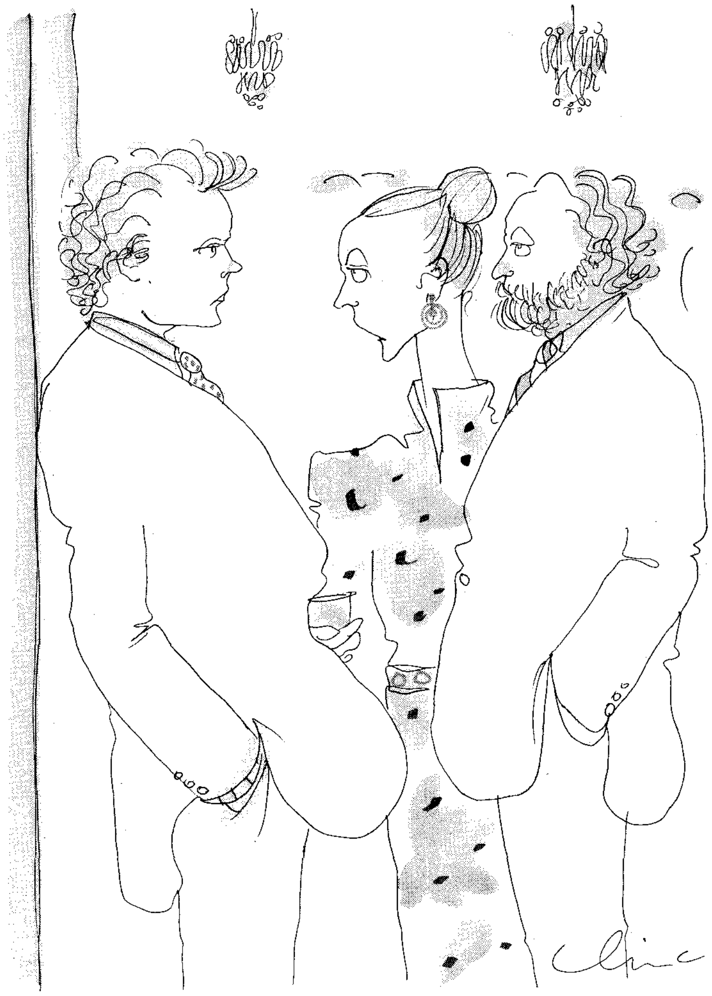
Jimmy Carter's Presidency. The President himself did not grasp that he was launching a new era and ceding his own political power. This choice, made as a result of political panic and financial distress, would in time profoundly alter the landscape of American life, transforming the terms of virtually every transaction in both the national economy and the world economy, creating a new order. It would also produce an ironic fulfillment of Jimmy Carter's plea for sacrifice and self-denial.

THE Federal Reserve System enjoyed a privilege extended to no other agency in Washington, not even the Central Intelligence Agency—it raised its own revenue and drafted its own operating budget without submitting either to Congress for approval. At the top of the system were the seven governors of the Federal Reserve Board, appointed to fourteen-year terms by the President and confirmed by the Senate; but the seven governors shared power with the presidents of the twelve Reserve Banks, each of which served the private banks in its district, and the Reserve Bank's board of directors. Six of the nine directors of each Reserve Bank were, in turn, elected by the commercial banks—the six thousand "member banks" of the Federal Reserve System. When the Fed decided the core questions of regulating the money supply, its debate and votes were conducted in a hybrid committee that combined the two levels and was known as the Federal Open Market Committee. In F.O.M.C. decisions, the governors had seven votes and Reserve Bank presidents had five, which were rotated annually among the districts—all but the vote of the president of the New York Fed. Because he was more important than any of the others, he did not have to share; he voted at all the F.O.M.C. meetings. Under this arrangement, critics complained, the regulation of the nation's money was decided in part by representatives of private interests—the banks.

To complicate the picture further, the commercial banks held shares of stock in each of the twelve Federal Reserve Banks—a circumstance that misled many into assuming that the Federal Reserve System was "privately owned." In reality, those shares were a vestigial feature of system membership which, however much it confused and excited populist critics, had virtually no practical meaning. The Federal Reserve System, including the twelve Federal Reserve Banks, was government—not a private entity. Commercial bankers did enjoy preferred access and influence at the Fed, but the internal power relationship gave the Board of Governors, appointed by Washington, more authority than the twelve Federal Reserve Bank presidents. When a regional board of directors selected its new president, the Fed chairman, in Washington, could effectively veto the choice. Philip E. Coldwell, who served for six years as president of the Dallas Fed before he was appointed a governor, in 1974, described the institution's own ambivalence on this question: "To some extent, the Federal Reserve considers itself government. Other times, when it serves, it considers itself not government."

The Federal Open Market Committee met to deliberate on the money supply ten or twelve times a year, and its decisions were made in secrecy. Only six or eight weeks later, after the F.O.M.C. had held its next meeting, would the Fed release a brief report on what the previous meeting had decided. Internal reports and memos—the economic analysis that supported the decisions—were kept confidential for five years. A full transcript of the committee's deliberations was never available, because it was not kept. The F.O.M.C. had once allowed public access to a transcript of its deliberations after the five-year waiting period, but even that practice was discontinued in the mid-nineteen-seventies. When Congress was enacting the Government in the Sunshine Act, Arthur Burns, then the Federal Reserve chairman, decided to abolish the full transcript, lest it be forced into public view prematurely and embarrass Fed officials. Not even Congress can look at the internal policy papers of the central bank.

The institution's official secrecy naturally created resentment, and from its beginning, in 1913, the Federal Reserve System was implicated in nativist conspiracy theories. Homespun tracts and polemical books described it as the secret nexus for sinister forces in the world. The Fed was the agent of the "Powers," usually identified as the "International Bankers" but sometimes as the "Illuminati" or the "Zionist Conspiracy"—the last an echo of the febrile anti-Semitism that had been associated with money since medieval Christianity. The Fed, it



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was said, was the operating center of a mysterious network of unseen but powerful people who were manipulating the society for their own purposes—world dominion. In the nineteen-seventies, as inflation accelerated, the dark theories about the Fed thrived anew, disseminated in scores of small newsletters and privately published books. During Paul Volcker's confirmation hearings before the Senate Banking Committee, in July, 1979, a citizens' group from Virginia testified against him, noting his connections with the "top secret" Bilderberg Conference, David Rockefeller's Chase Manhattan Bank, the Council on Foreign Relations, and the Trilateral Commission—all of them staples in the popular theories of "one world" conspiracy.

If these feverish polemics were ludicrous, they were nevertheless rooted in an ancient cultural reality about money which was still evident in the age of computers. Money remained a function of faith. It required an implicit and universal social consent that was indeed mysterious. If a society was to create money and use it, every member of the society must believe in it. Only then could worthless pieces of paper take on value. When a society lost faith in money, it had implicitly lost faith in itself.

WHEN academic economists or monetary experts at the Federal Reserve talked about money, they meant something specific that was different from what most Americans understood the word to mean. In colloquial usage, money meant simply wealth: "My money is in stocks and bonds," and "His money is in real estate." To the economists and the Fed experts, money was limited to what could be used immediately to buy things; that is, the cash in one's pocket—coins and bills—and the demand deposit in a checking account at the bank. When economists talked about "the money supply," or the principal monetary aggregate, known as M-1, they meant only money that could be spent right away—the gross sum of all the currency and checking-account demand deposits held by every consumer and business in the country. In August of 1979, the spending money called M-1 totalled only $364 billion for the entire United States economy. That hardly seemed adequate to sustain a gross national product of $2.5 trillion—the total of goods and services produced in America during that year. The modest supply of money was sufficient, however, because in the course of a year this money would turn over many times, as people exchanged it.

Most of M-1—about three-fourths of it—existed as checking-account deposits, and the rest as currency. The proportions did not matter, because the two were interchangeable. If for some reason the public wanted to hold more of its money in hard cash, the Bureau of Engraving and Printing printed more bills and the Federal Reserve distributed them through the banking system, but the printing and distribution did not in themselves create new money, because the cash was simply substituted for the existing deposits in checking accounts.

If a factory worker put part of his wages in a savings account at his bank or in the neighborhood savings and loan, he would still regard his money as money, but monetary economists would treat it differently. Unlike standard bank checking accounts, a savings account paid him interest on his money. But it was no longer so easy for him to spend his money immediately. He would most likely have to

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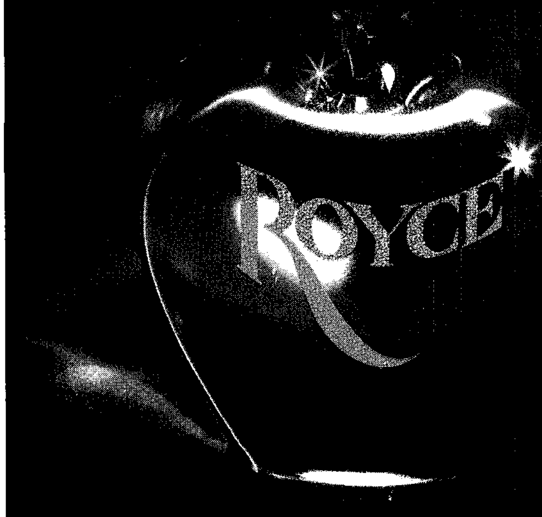

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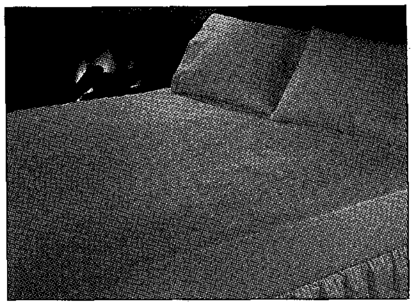
withdraw funds from his savings account, deposit the money in his checking account, wait several days for the deposit to be verified, then write a check to make his payment. Thus, the money moved more slowly into economic transactions and was less liquid in the hydraulics of the economy. Economists counted it in a second category—a broader monetary aggregate, known as M-2. M-2 included all the savings accounts and small time deposits at banks, credit unions, and savings and loans. M-1 and M-2 together totalled about $1.5 trillion.

Following the same distinctions, M-3 was a still larger category of money—larger and less liquid than the others. It added such large-denomination financial instruments as hundred-thousand-dollar certificates of deposit, which only corporations, financial institutions, or wealthy investors could afford to hold, and usually held for a specified period, like three months or six months. They could withdraw their money eventually, but it was not readily available for spending. The M-3 aggregate—which included M-1 and M-2—totalled about $1.7 trillion. A final measure of money, known as L, for “total liquidity,” attempted to count all the financial assets—Treasury bills, commercial paper, United States savings bonds, and others—that could be sold and converted into spending money, though perhaps at a penalty if market prices were down. L totalled a little less than $2.1 trillion.

The three main blends of money described, in a sense, the fluid that the Federal Reserve attempted to regulate inside the tanks and plumbing of the financial system. The blends of money had different viscosities, like three different grades of oil. The spending money called M-1 was light and free-flowing. M-2 and M-3 were denser and flowed more slowly. Any business or family could shift its money from one blend to another, simply by moving it from one kind of liquid asset to another; such shifts between the three monetary aggregates were under way constantly, in millions of financial transactions, and beyond the control of government. The shifts did not alter the over-all size of the money supply, but in the money dynamics that the Federal Reserve monitored they were an important element—a source of continuing uncertainty and occasional error.

America’s money, however, did not stop at its borders. “Our money is the world’s money,” as Paul Volcker put



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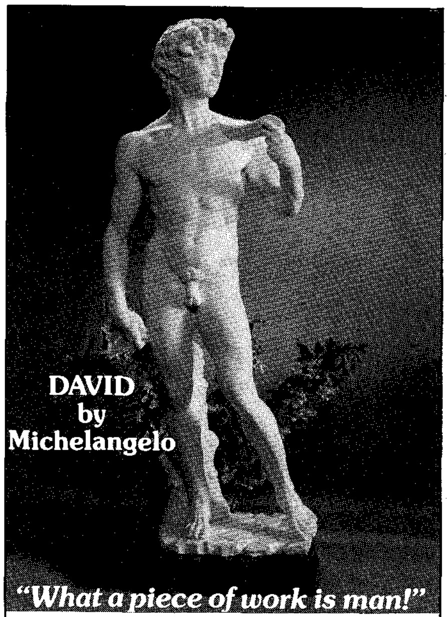

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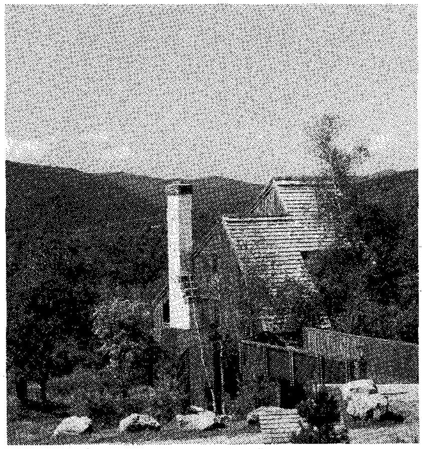

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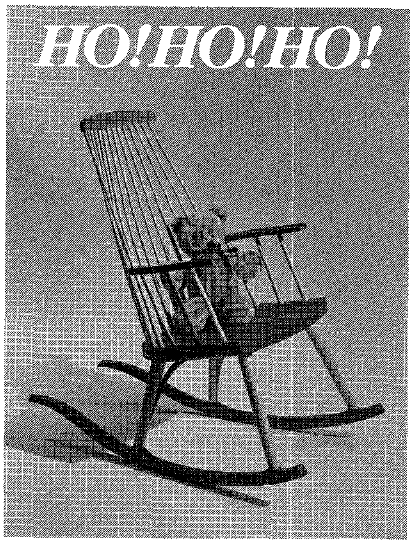
it. The dollar was the dominant currency of world trade, so its value affected global transactions far beyond our shores. If Saudi Arabia sold oil to Latin America, the transaction was in dollars, and a decline of the dollar in international exchange meant that the Arabs lost real income. "Fundamentally, what disturbs Peoria disturbs Zurich," Volcker declared. In addition, the United States financial system functioned in a "fifty-first state," as one analyst called it—the Eurodollar market. A huge pool of expatriate dollars, built up over the postwar decades by the trading and investment of United States multinational corporations, existed offshore for lending and borrowing. In 1979, United States banks alone had assets of more than $400 billion in overseas offices, and this money was essentially unregulated. Technically, it was not part of the domestic money supply, but every day the major banks, corporations, and investors shifted back and forth between the domestic market and the Eurodollar market, seeking a higher rate of return or a cheaper loan. The dollar in Peoria, therefore, was in fact influenced eventually by the dollar in Zurich, and vice versa.

The economists' definition of "money" was not at the heart of the public confusion about the Fed and its works, however. The fundamental source of mystery—the process that so defied common intuition that it did not seem quite believable—was the creation of money. And new money was created not only by the Federal Reserve but also by private commercial banks. They did it by new lending—by expanding the outstanding loans on their books. Routinely, a bank borrowed money from one group, the depositors, and lent it to someone else, the borrower, thereby performing a straightforward function as intermediary. But if that were all that occurred, then credit would be frozen in size, unable to expand with new economic growth. On the margins, therefore, bankers expanded their lending on their own, and the over-all pool of credit grew—and the bank credit turned into money.

A bank officer would authorize a hundred-thousand-dollar loan to a small-business man—a judgment that the businessman's future earnings would be sufficient to repay the loan, that in the future his enterprise would create real value, which would justify the risk in the creation of the additional money. Ordinarily, the banker

HO!HO!HO!



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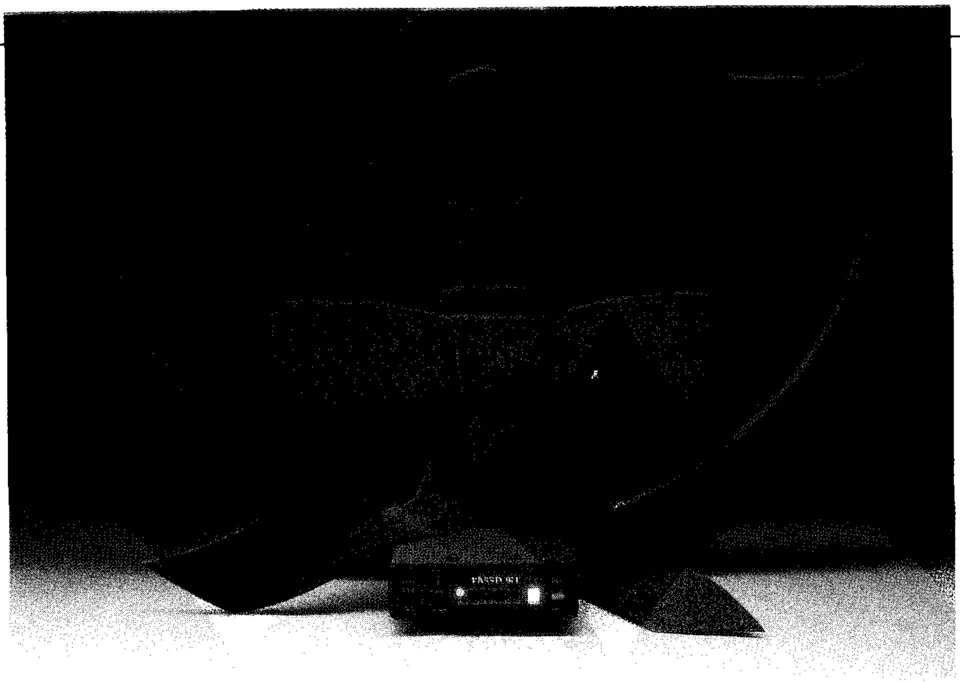

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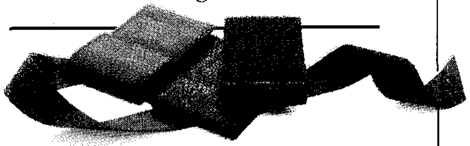

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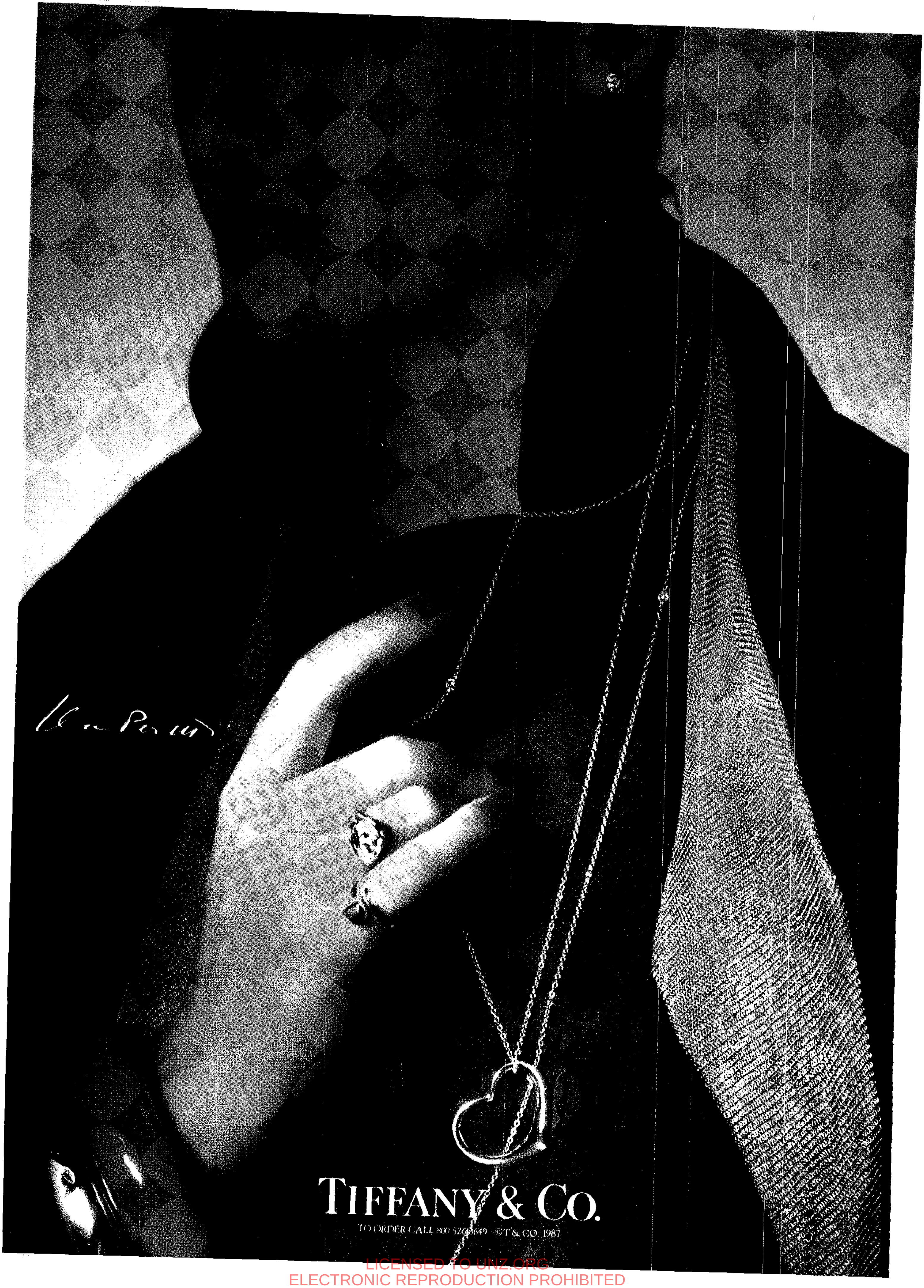
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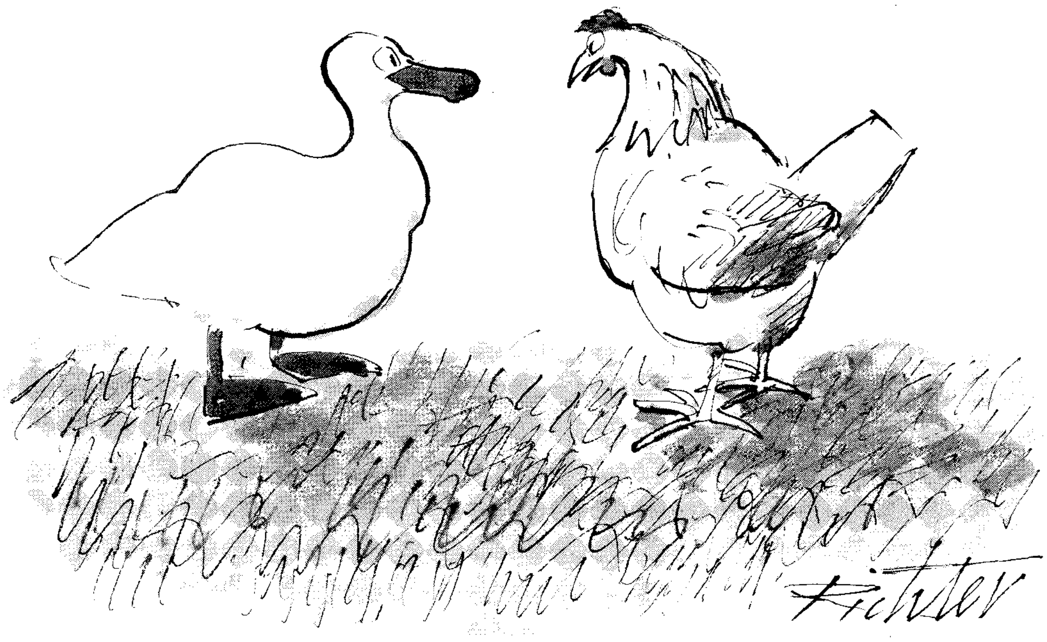

"Just between us, I came first, but I shredded the evidence."

• •

would not hand over a hundred thousand dollars in currency. He would simply write a check or, more likely, enter a credit for a hundred thousand dollars in the businessman's bank account. Either way, money would be created by an entry in a ledger. It was a reality that everyone accepted. The businessman would go out and spend the money, writing checks on his expanded account, and everyone would honor their value. The creation of new money, then, was really based on bank-created debt. This concept was what baffled and outraged so many critics of the money system. Money ought to be "real," they insisted. It should be based on something tangible from the past—accumulated wealth, like gold—and not on a banker's hunch about the future.

How could such a system possibly work? Why didn't it collapse and produce social disaster? The short, simple explanation was trust. People trusted the banks (and, by extension, the Federal Reserve). They believed, perhaps not even knowing the actual mechanics, that bankers would use this magic prudently. Banks would make sound loans, which would be repaid, and they would always keep enough money on hand so that any individual depositor could withdraw his money whenever he needed it.

If enough loans went bad and enough people became distrustful, they all went to the bank at once to withdraw their money, and discovered that actually the bank didn't have enough. A "run on the bank" usually ended in failure and padlocked doors, but the legendary bank panics of history were largely unknown to modern Americans. The original purpose for which the Federal Reserve was created was to protect the banking system from such periodic liquidity crises—temporary shortages of money that led to failure. From the Discount window, the Fed provided short-term loans to banks that were temporarily strained, helping them through the tight spots. With one spectacular exception—the crash of 1929 and the ensuing banking panic that closed nearly half the banks in America—the Fed's protection had been generally successful.

The ultimate purpose of the Federal Reserve System, then, was to control the society's over-all expansion of debt—to decide, in effect, what level of hopes and promises the future could reasonably fulfill. If new credit expanded recklessly, beyond the realistic ability of the economy to expand its output, then the future would deliver failure and disorder. If the new lending was restrained too severely, then feasible ventures would languish and the future could not realize its potential. The Federal Reserve's estimates of the future were calculated by dense mathematical equations, of course, but its social function closely resembled the prophetic role of the ancient priests who, with their closely held temple secrets, were given divine license to look into the future and tell whether lean or abundant years lay ahead. The Federal Reserve governors also made prophecies, but they sometimes had the ability to make their predictions come true.

The Fed's leverage for controlling the banks' expansion of credit was a mechanism inherited from centuries of banking history—the requirement that each bank hold a portion of its total deposits in reserve, to guarantee that it would always have sufficient funds for normal banking business. The Fed required that reserves be deposited at one of the Federal Reserve Banks or held as cash in the bank's own vault. Reserves were like earnest money against the possibility of bad surprises—a rash of failed loans or a rush of withdrawals by depositors. The size of the Fed's reserve requirement varied according to the size of the banks and the types of accounts, but the basic requirement for member banks in 1979 was 16.25 per cent; for every hundred dollars a bank held in checking accounts, it had to park $16.25 at the local branch of the Fed—idle money, collecting no interest. The total reserves held in the Reserve Banks that year came to about $41 billion, backing about $258 billion in demand deposits. When all the currency held by the public was added to the $258 billion, the sum, about $362 billion, was the nation's basic money supply—the monetary aggregate called M-1.

To expand the money supply or contract it, the Federal Reserve created more reserves for the banking system or withdrew reserves—using its two small valves: the Discount window, lending directly to banks; or the Open Market Desk, buying and selling United States government securities. Either way, the Fed's action increased the total reserves of the banking system and thus increased the commercial banks' capacity to make new loans. The additional lending by banks, in turn, created new deposits, and thus a larger money supply. The

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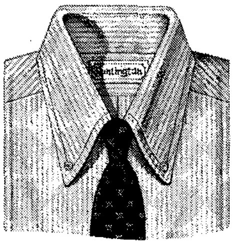

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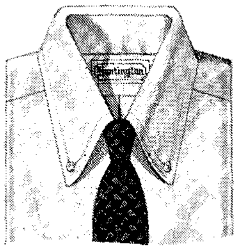

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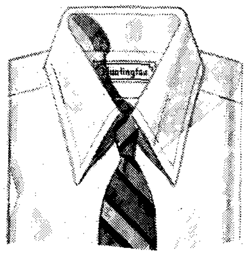

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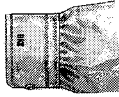

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Fed's injections of new reserves, whether executed through Discount loans or Open Market purchases, were sometimes called "high-powered money," because the money-creation powers of commercial banks would multiply many times whatever new money the Fed had added.

This multiplier effect seemed dizzying, too. If the Fed injected a billion dollars in new reserve deposits, the banking system, after setting aside, say, 16.25 per cent to satisfy the reserve requirement, could immediately commit $840 million of it to new loans, which would instantly create $840 million in new deposits. It didn't matter which banks held the deposit accounts; the new deposits would immediately be the basis for new lending. The banks would set aside 16.25 per cent of the $840 million and lend out the remaining $700 million. Those loans, too, would immediately become new deposits, and permit still more new lending—of $586 million—and so on, in diminishing sums. This multiplying process, in which new credit became new money, continued until the banks exhausted the additional lending capacity created for them by the new reserves. The original billion dollars injected by the Federal Reserve thus became over five billion dollars in new deposits—deposits that were now counted as part of the nation's M-1 aggregate.

Every resourceful banker, every well-managed bank worked to take maximum advantage of these powers and so increase the bank's interest earnings. Therefore, the natural state of the banking system was to be "booked up," its reserves committed to the last possible dollar. If, in slack times, a bank could not find enough borrowers to soak up its credit capacity, it would buy government bonds that paid interest—using the same money-creating process. The bank would simply write a check or create a deposit for whoever sold it the securities. When a bank's portfolio exceeded its reserves, perhaps because its lending policy was too aggressive, it had to get in balance by the close of the Fed's weekly reporting period. There were two ways it could do so. It could call in some loans and extinguish the deposits, but that was awkward. More typically, it would borrow the reserves temporarily—perhaps overnight or for two or three days—either from banks that had a surplus in their reserve accounts or, if necessary, from the Federal Reserve itself. The bank-to-

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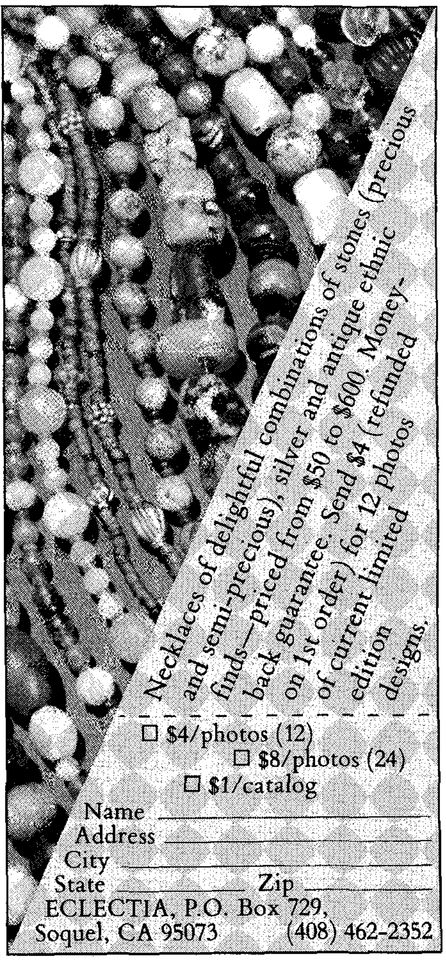

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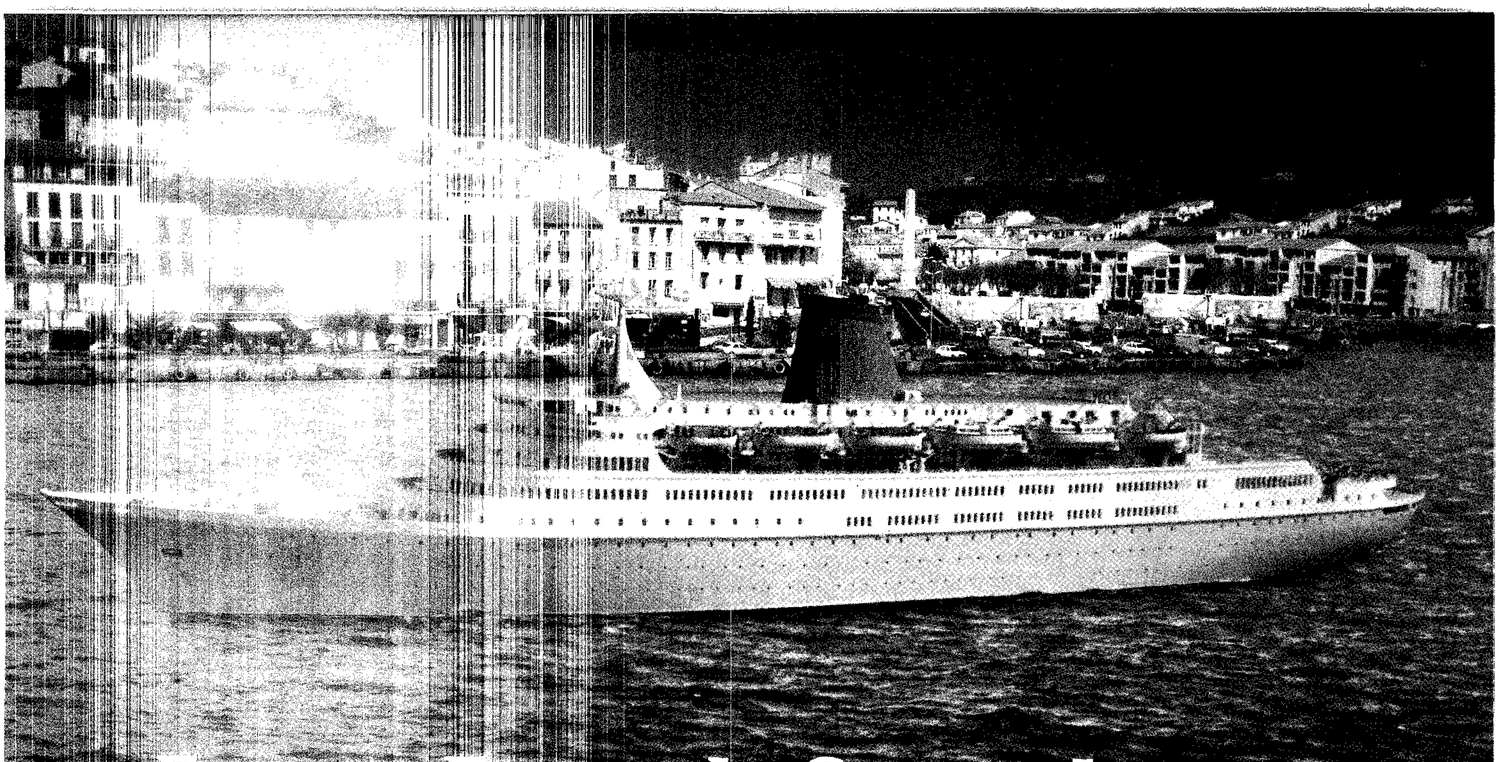

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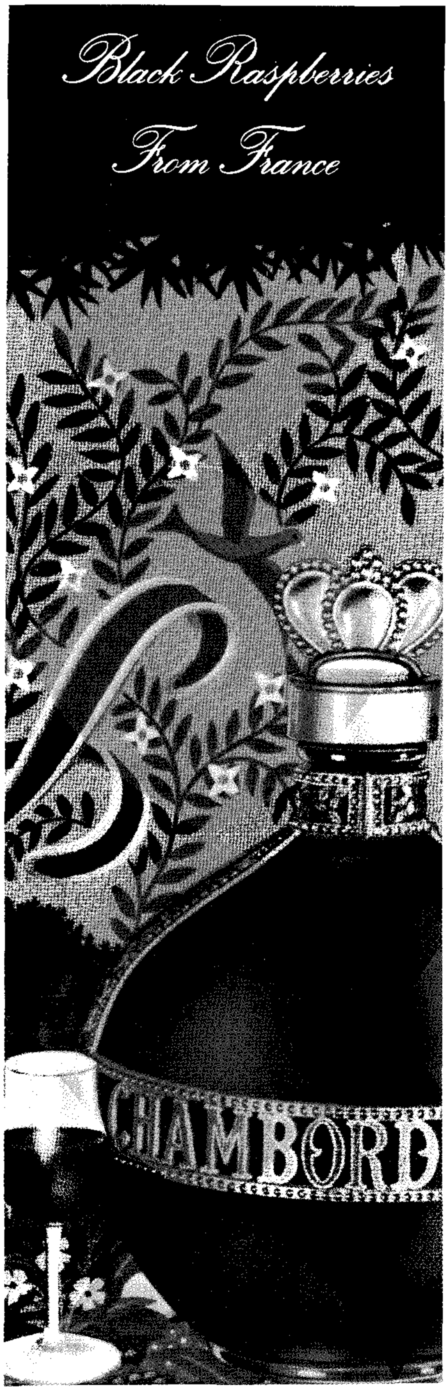

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bank borrowing of reserve funds, known as the Federal Funds market, sometimes exceeded a hundred billion dollars a day, traded in the money market by telephone and telex.

The price of this overnight borrowing was the interest rate known as the Federal Funds rate—the rate that reacted most sensitively and immediately to the slightest changes in supply and demand. When many banks were short on reserves, they had to bid up the Fed Funds rate to get them; when credit was slack and the supply of reserves exceeded the banking system's demand for funds, the Fed Funds rate fell. It was the leading indicator of where interest rates were headed generally.

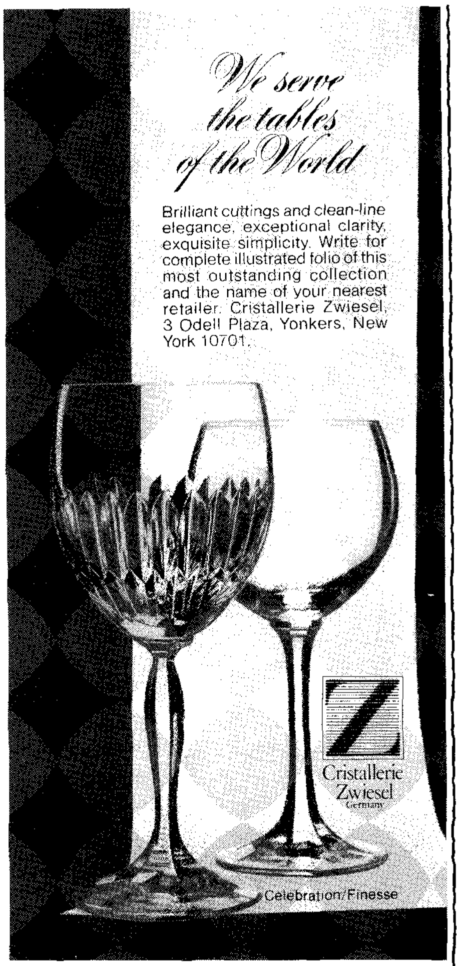
The Federal Funds rate illustrated how the Federal Reserve controlled interest rates—the price of borrowed money. The Fed's own daily actions would move the rate up or down quite precisely and almost instantly, as reserves were added to or withdrawn from the banking system. If the Fed restricted the inflowing supply of new reserves below the banking system's demand for them, their price naturally went up: the Federal Funds rate rose as banks bid among themselves for the scarce supply of excess funds. This part was straightforward. But the Federal Reserve also directly influenced the demand side of the equation. When it forced this interest rate to rise, the move discouraged borrowers from taking out new loans, and so compelled banks to slow down the expansion of their loan portfolios.

Given the fluid nature of finance, manipulations of the Fed Funds rate swiftly rippled across the entire spectrum of short-term lending, with similar feedback effects on supply and demand. With rare exceptions, the hydraulics of the money market responded faithfully to the engineer's direction: when the Fed raised or lowered the Fed Funds rate, then bank C.D.s, commercial paper, T-bills, and the others followed.

Long-term interest rates, too, were powerfully influenced by the Fed, but with less predictable results. The bond market had a mind of its own, and bond investors made their own forecasts of the future—particularly of future inflation. If they concluded that the Fed's management of money or other economic factors would alter the dollar's value many years hence, they might decide to bid long-term rates in a direction contrary to the immediate conditions of supply and demand. The Fed had the power to pull short-term interest rates up or down, but it had to coax and persuade the long-term investors.

Ultimately, the most important effects of interest-rate changes were not on the financial investors but on the entire economy of workers and producers. The price of money affected virtually every other price for goods and services, from new homes and cars or vacations financed by credit cards to the largest projects of industrial expansion. The Federal Reserve's regulatory lever, imperfect as it was, acted like a powerful wand that could encourage or impede, stimulate or depress the economic life of the nation.

IN 1963, the University of Chicago economist Milton Friedman published, with a co-author, Anna Jacobson Schwartz, the magnum opus of his career, "A Monetary History of the United States, 1867-1960." To professionals, Friedman's book was a commanding piece of scholarship—a dense work that traced the entire course of money, banking, and United States monetary policy from Andrew Johnson to John F. Kennedy. Most politicians in Washington, however, saw Friedman as an eccentric figure with an odd obsession. He kept appearing in academic and political forums, preaching the same profoundly conservative sermon: the Keynesian orthodoxy that had dominated economics for thirty years was wrong—and not just a little wrong, Friedman insisted, but totally, fundamentally, disastrously wrong. Few politicians took his message seriously. He was proselytizing in the early nineteen-sixties, after all, and that was the era of practical triumph for the liberal intellectual heirs of John Maynard Keynes, the great British economist. The Democratic Administrations of Kennedy and Johnson were aggressively applying the lessons that Keynes had spelled out during the Depression—that is, they were manipulating the federal government's budget in order to stimulate growth in the private economy. By either cutting taxes or increasing federal spending, or by doing both, Keynes had maintained, the government could augment the aggregate demand of the private economy, the total spending power of consumers and businesses. In essence, the government could put more money into people's pockets, either by taxing them less or by giving them cash subsidies or by



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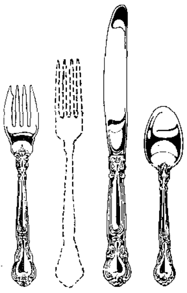

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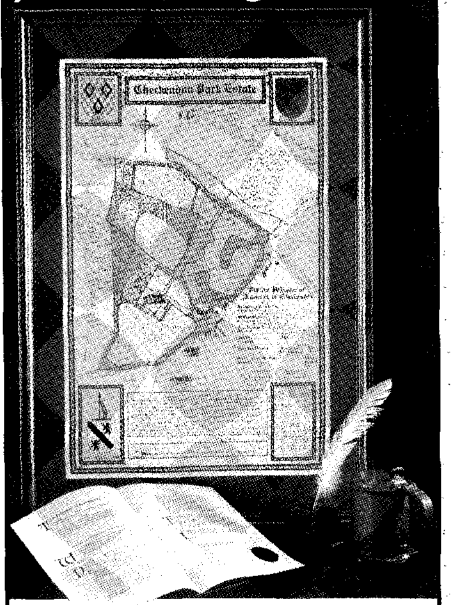
buying more of whatever they had to sell, whether it was labor or cement or surplus wheat. The increased aggregate demand induced by Washington would ripple through the private economy and multiply.

Since the government was pumping out more money than it collected in taxes, the strategy produced temporary deficits in the federal budget, and these were a source of constant alarm to conservatives. The liberal architects of what had been christened the New Economics argued persuasively—at least, the argument persuaded the political majority—that engineered deficits were therapeutic. The increased economic activity stimulated by federal fiscal policy would more than compensate for the budget shortfall, they declared. The increased demand for goods would lead corporations and owners of wealth to invest in new factories—the process of capital formation that was the heart of economic growth. Expanding production would mean more jobs and rising personal incomes, broadly distributed through the society. As a consequence, the revenue base of the federal government—all the workers and businesses that paid taxes—would be permanently enlarged.

The New Economics worked; in fact, it produced spectacular returns. The unemployment rate, which was nearly seven per cent just before Kennedy took office, began to fall dramatically as the tax-reduction and spending policies took hold. The American economy entered a long cycle of robust expansion, and unemployment fell below five per cent, then below four per cent, where it remained for four years. Eventually, it dropped to only three and a half per cent, the practical equivalent of full employment in America—a job for everyone who wanted to work.

Milton Friedman, meanwhile, worried about inflation. He testified frequently before Congress and patiently pointed out to committee chairmen why they should worry, too. At the time, his complaints seemed unreasonable. The Consumer Price Index rose by a modest increment each year but never by as much as two per cent through 1965. Wealthy bond investors might grumble when the inflation rate hit one and a half per cent, but the rest of the country was more impressed by the general prosperity. Friedman, nevertheless, persisted with his predictions. Paul Samuelson, an eminent Keynesian at M.I.T., once likened

A Unique Gift from England



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him to "a man with a foil attacking a battleship."

As a libertarian conservative, Friedman objected to nearly any form of government intrusion into the natural functionings of the private marketplace. But he had a more pointed quarrel with the Keynesian perspective. Fiscal policy, the budget choices that Keynesians thought so important, produced only ephemeral results, Friedman insisted. The fundamental source of government influence on the private economy was its control of money—the monetary policy made by the Federal Reserve. The Fed's manipulation of the money supply, Friedman added, was consistently destabilizing and damaging.

To mainstream economists in the early sixties, including many who worked at the Federal Reserve, Friedman's essays and lectures sounded quaint. And, as they recognized, his basic ideas were not new. Friedman was essentially asking the political community to renounce all that it had learned from Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. He was audaciously attempting to rehabilitate classical economic doctrines of the nineteenth century—the faith in free markets and an abhorrence of government intrusion. These ideas had themselves been the orthodox wisdom for generations of economists, businessmen, and political leaders.

But the old ideology was brutally discredited by the crash of 1929 and the Depression that followed. As social misery deepened and massive unemployment stretched on for a decade, the popular faith in free markets was shattered. Somewhat haphazardly, the New Deal advanced a new creed: an activist national government must intervene to overcome the shortcomings and weaknesses of private enterprise. This new idea—government's obligation to manage the economy—was legitimatized by the national trauma of the Depression and was embraced both in public opinion and in scholarly theory.

Friedman's old-fashioned preoccupation with the money supply collided with a corollary lesson taught by the Depression years. The new generation of Keynesians concluded from the experience of the thirties that the money supply was not a reliable tool for stimulating growth in the economy. Fiscal policy—control of taxes and spending—was much more potent and direct. After all, the nation was awash with excess liquidity, an overabundance of

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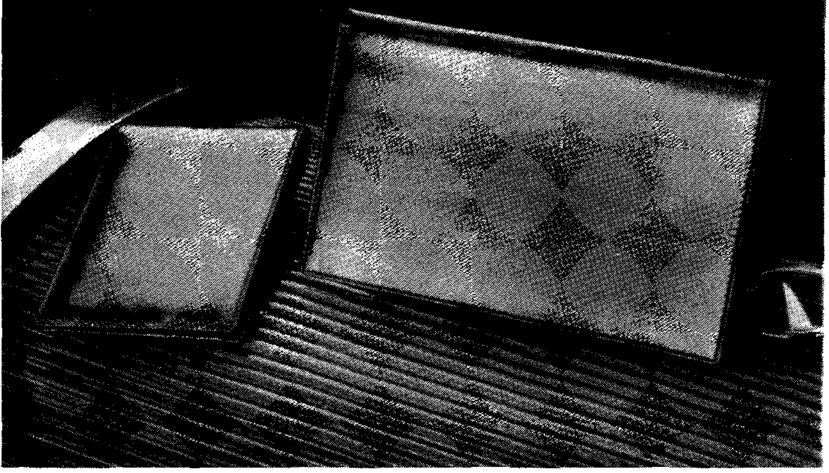

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idle wealth, during the Depression years. Capital was immobilized by the general contraction. The problem, crudely stated, was not a shortage of money; the problem was that the people who had it were afraid to spend it. If consumers could not buy, then capital owners would not invest in new factories or rehire the unemployed. Everyone held back, and the cycle of caution and contraction fed on itself. As the Keynesians' cliché had it, trying to revive the economy by expanding the money supply was like "pushing on a string."

In this contest of ideas, Friedman's book brilliantly reargued the historical record of the Depression and insisted that the conventional analysis was mistaken. Friedman asserted that both the magnitude of the original collapse of 1929 and the long contraction of the real economy were probably caused by—and were certainly exacerbated by—the Federal Reserve's failure to provide an adequate money supply. In the debates among economists, the Friedman position was summarized in a new cliché: "Money matters."

None of this intellectual combat would have counted for much in the lives of ordinary Americans if the good times of the sixties had continued. Milton Friedman might have remained an obscure, eccentric thinker living in the wrong age. Instead, in 1976 he won the Nobel Prize in economics. Graduate students listened to their Keynesian professors and then to Friedman, and some began calling themselves "monetarists"—the label that was applied to his disciples. Wall Street analysts followed the money numbers—the weekly fluctuations of M-1—more closely, and concluded, just as Friedman had, that M-1 was a more reliable predictor of economic swings than the changing federal budget. Many executives of major banks and many corporate economists were converted, too, along with reporters and editors in the financial press. Eventually, the converts included important political figures in Washington.

The rise of monetarism flowed from a new economic phenomenon confronting the nation—the enduring and escalating inflation of prices. Starting in 1966, inflation not only worsened and persisted but was soon accompanied by higher levels of unemployment. In the Keynesian analysis, these contrary extremes were not supposed to occur simultaneously. What, exactly, was causing this modern spiral of inflation? Many explanations were proffered; indeed, a bewildering variety of answers came from the economists. Lyndon Johnson was blamed, for overstimulating the economy when it was already at its maximum capacity—adding to the federal budget tens of billions for the war in Indo-China alongside the burgeoning Great Society spending for education, health, and the alleviation of poverty. The Arab sheikhs and OPEC were blamed, for the oil-price shocks of 1973 and later. Workers and labor unions were blamed, for demanding wage increases that exceeded the increase in worker productivity. Corporate managers were blamed, for giving in too easily to labor's demands and passing on the cost in the price of their products. All these diffuse factors were relevant to the inflation, yet the very complexity was unsatisfying. The standard explanations from economists seemed to blame everyone in general and no one in particular. Who, exactly, *was* to blame?

Milton Friedman offered a much simpler answer: inflation was caused by the Federal Reserve. An often

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quoted scholarly dictum of his was actually an accusation: "Inflation is everywhere and anywhere a monetary phenomenon." In translation, that meant prices could not have been inflated if the Federal Reserve had not provided excessive amounts of money to the economy. The Federal Reserve had swerved back and forth irresponsibly, Friedman said, supplying too much money and causing inflation, then tightening the money supply abruptly and choking the economy and producing recession.

His solution was radical. Congress should strip the Fed of its privileged independence and enact legislative instructions for United States monetary policy. The Fed must be compelled to accept a simple rule governing its functions: from week to week, month to month, year to year, without deviation, the money supply should be expanded at a fixed rate—somewhere between three and five per cent annually for the basic aggregate, M-1. Thus, money growth would be held to a historical-average growth rate for the national economy, and would avoid sharp swings. Private business, financial markets, and consumers could then count on a stable future, instead of lurching between inflation and recession. A monetary rule, Friedman explained, would not eliminate the natural highs and lows of the business cycle, but it would moderate them—and guarantee that government intrusion would not make things worse.

If the monetarist prescription, a fixed rule for money, was correct, why didn't the Federal Reserve follow such a rule? In public, the Fed's contempt for its monetarist critics was usually concealed by polite technical arguments. In private, most of the senior officials of the Federal Reserve shared a sense of frustration that so many people were "taken in" by the Friedman argument. "The monetarists are the chiropractors of modern economics," one governor said. Fed officials believed that the monetarists swept away *all* the complexities of central banking and blithely pretended that they didn't matter—questions about the definition of money itself, about seasonal fluctuations in the public's need for money, about the external forces that reverberated through the banking system and the real economy. The Federal Reserve tried to adjust for all these and other influences on the money supply. That was the essence of what the Federal Open Market Committee debated every month

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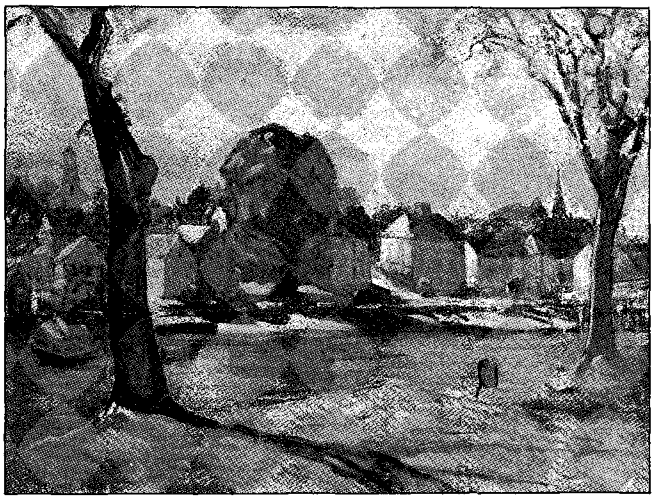

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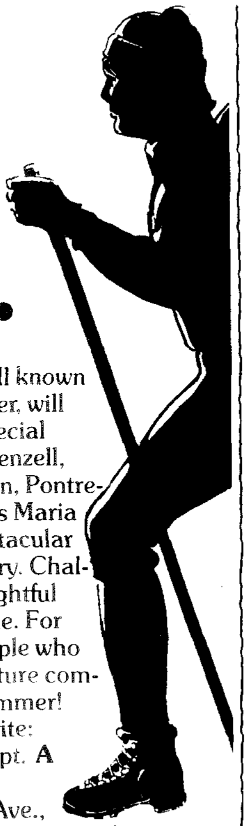
or so; that was why the committee thought it impossible to supply the same amount of reserves each week, each month, and *not* adjust for change. Human society, in other words, did not proceed by neat historical averages.

The Fed was enormously vulnerable, however. Fed economists could make technical arguments against the rigidity of Friedman's proposal for a monetary rule, but the reality of the last fifteen years was irrefutable: inflation had steadily escalated. The monetarists' argument was that this could not have happened if the Federal Reserve had not allowed it to happen —if the Federal Reserve had not yielded too easily and too often to short-run economic aspirations. In an era of uncontrolled inflation, an outcry from conservatives was natural. They were the traditional advocates of "hard money," the defenders of capital, and the wealthy citizens whose financial assets were being eroded by inflation. Oddly, though, many liberal Democrats in Congress also came to embrace the conservative doctrine of monetarism. While they never claimed the label of monetarist, Democrats joined Republicans in pressuring Fed officials to move toward the operating methods advocated by Friedman and his allies—strict and steady control over M-1. Monetarism appealed to elected politicians across the spectrum, because if the Federal Reserve was to be blamed for inflation then they might be absolved.

TO any historian examining the data on prices across an entire sweep of American history, an obvious pattern was visible. What caused inflation? The circumstances surrounding the recurrence of inflationary spirals strongly suggested that the source of these traumas lay not in economics but in politics—in choices made by government, or, more precisely, in choices that the government refused to make.

Through the decades of United States history, the price index rose and fell, usually to a moderate degree, but there were six distinct occasions when prices escalated abruptly—periods that appear as sharp upward spikes on a historical chart of United States inflation. The first one coincided with the birth of the Republic—the inflationary frenzy that came during the Revolutionary War. It occurred before reliable data on prices were collected, but the trauma is still remembered in the



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expression "not worth a Continental." The second spike of inflation occurred in 1813-15, after the War of 1812. The third, and sharpest, explosion of inflation came in 1863-65, during the Civil War. Another dramatic burst came during and immediately after the First World War. The fifth spike occurred after the removal of wartime wage-and-price controls in 1946. And the final one—the beginning of the contemporary inflation—was associated with the war in Vietnam. In all but the last two instances, a rapid run-up of inflation was followed by a long and painful period of deflation, in which prices fell drastically. Falling prices produced their own version of suffering and dislocation: failed banks and businesses, farm foreclosures, widespread unemployment, impoverishment.

These simple facts of history suggested a simple answer to the question: virulent inflation resulted when the country went to war. That, of course, did not explain why this was so, and the details were different in each instance. But all the inflationary episodes were preceded by a certain pattern of behavior on the part of the government: it mobilized by spending vastly more money than it collected in taxes and made up the difference by borrowing.

The latest surge of inflation was unique in one respect—its unprecedented duration—and was therefore more puzzling. The contemporary run-up of prices started visibly with the Vietnam War, in 1966. But, unlike the other episodes, it did not halt after a few years and subside. Inflation continued upward for more than a decade—even in peacetime, even when the economy was slack. The inflationary surge of the nineteen-sixties and nineteen-seventies was not as steep as previous ones, but it persisted and compounded more dramatically than anything that had happened before.

The Consumer Price Index was calculated as 100 at 1967 prices. By 1970, the index was at 116. By 1975, it was at 161. Four years later, it was at 217. During the Civil War, prices doubled in only a few years, but Lincoln was fighting a war. This time, the price level more than doubled in less than fifteen years. And during the last half of this period the nation was at peace.

The historical question had to be turned around: What was different about the modern postwar era to cause

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it to produce this unprecedented trend? The plausible answers were essentially political. As the economic historian Walt W. Rostow has explained, the end of colonial domination in the world inevitably gave the newly independent nations, most of them poor and undeveloped, somewhat more leverage over the terms of trade with the industrial nations of the West, including the United States. This meant that the poorer nations could demand somewhat higher prices for the raw commodities, from copper to coffee, that they sold to the wealthy nations. The most spectacular instance of this new basis of global power was, of course, crude oil. Higher costs for imported raw materials naturally pushed domestic prices upward (though most of the less developed countries remained in weak bargaining positions, and continued to undergo exploitation by industrial capitalism).

Another new political condition was the still fresh memory of the Great Depression. After the Second World War, neither political party wanted to chance repeating the misery of the nineteen-thirties, and that collective fear pushed policymakers in the opposite direction: they pursued economic expansion and accepted the risk of inflation. In fact, a modern triumph of the government's economic management was that after the Second World War Americans did not have to endure an episode of ruinous deflation like the ones that had always followed previous wars.

There was one other fundamental change: the Cold War with the Soviet Union. After the Second World War, the United States economy never actually returned to a peacetime footing. It demobilized briefly but quickly rearmed for global struggle. Over the next three decades, driven by fears of conflict with the Soviets, the United States not only fought in two wars (Korea and Vietnam) but kept itself in constant readiness for war. This was unlike any prior era. The government's defense spending absorbed a permanent share of the economy's output, boosting employment and incomes but also competing with other objectives.

A political consensus in the country had developed an implicit understanding that endured for more than thirty years, through liberal and conservative regimes, under Democrats and Republicans: the government would refuse to choose between war mobilization and peacetime spending. It

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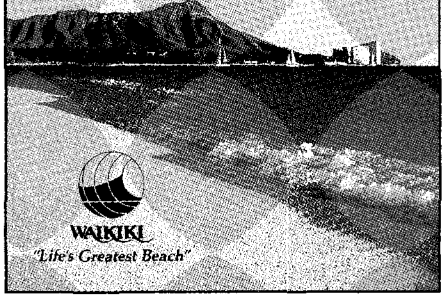
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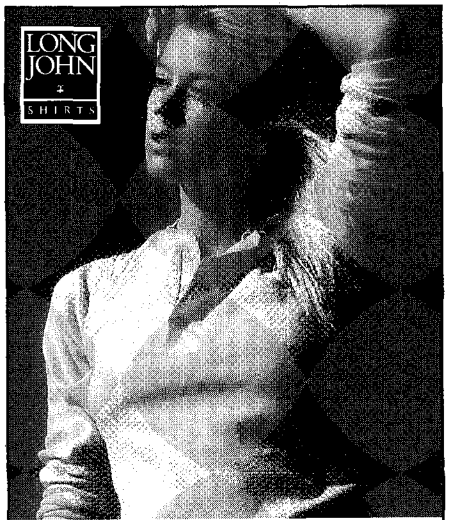
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would carry on both. While the United States remained mobilized, the country resumed the full domestic prosperity of a nation at peace—producing and consuming goods in unprecedented volume. The standard of living for typical American families reached a level of comfort, even of luxury, undreamed of by earlier generations. For a time, Americans had the best of both worlds—the pleasures of peace and the economic energy of war.

Eventually, the failure to choose between the two had its effect on the economy and the government's balance sheet. "After years of inflation," Paul Volcker told an audience in 1979, "the long run has caught up with us."

BOTH as technical expert and as political operator, Paul Volcker was brilliantly prepared for his new post. The son of a small-town city manager, he was a public servant who had served the political economy in both its capitals, Washington and Wall Street. He had been a policymaker under four Republican and Democratic Presidents and had spent years on Capitol Hill fencing with congressional committees and lobbying for votes. He was in Treasury when John F. Kennedy proposed the stimulative tax cuts of the early nineteen-sixties and when Lyndon Johnson launched the United States war in Indo-China. Under Nixon, Volcker worked closely with Treasury Secretary John Connally, an urbane Texas politician, who frequently complained about Volcker's dowdy appearance. (Connally reportedly once threatened to fire Volcker if he didn't get a haircut and buy a new suit.) Together, Connally and Volcker engineered a momentous change in the world's monetary system—the dismantling, in 1971, of the Bretton Woods agreement, which since 1946 had made the United States dollar the stable benchmark for all currencies. In the course of the controversy over the reforms, Volcker frequently travelled abroad, confronting and bargaining with finance ministers and central bankers of every industrial nation.

And there was a wonderful irony about the man: Volcker was not interested in money—at least, not in acquiring it for himself. One of the minor absurdities of the Federal Reserve System was that Federal Reserve Bank presidents, whose salaries were set by their boards of directors, and not by Congress, were paid much more generously than the Federal Reserve Sys-

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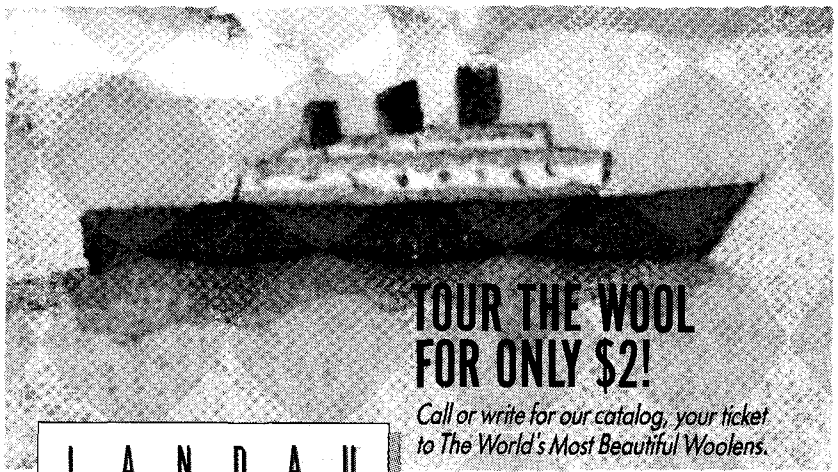

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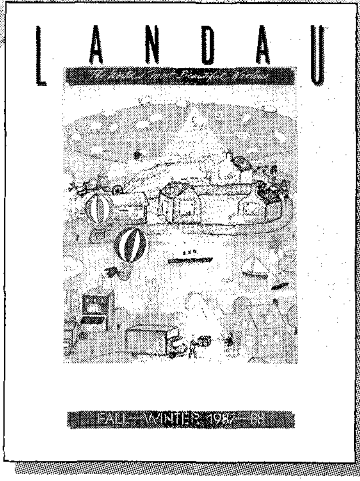

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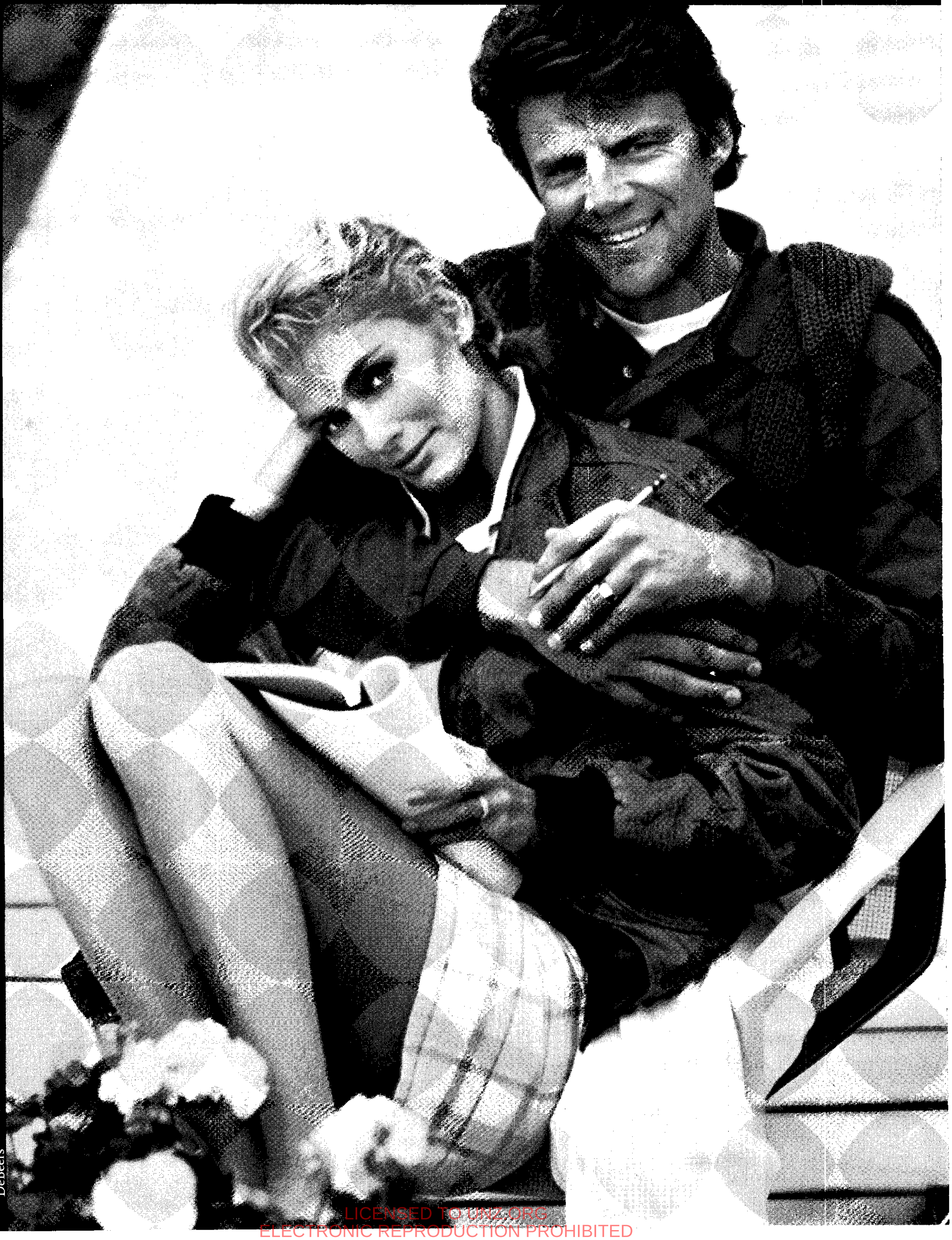

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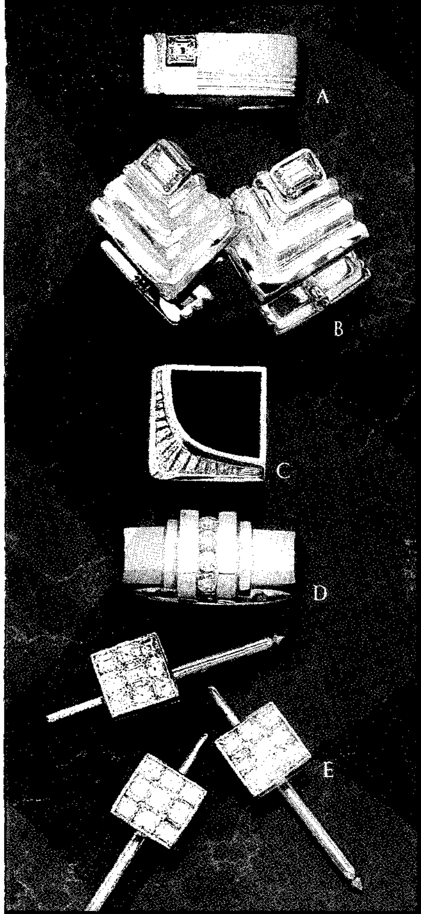

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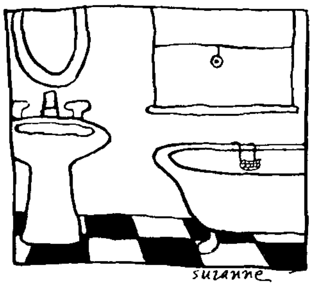
tem's governors and its chairman. Thus, when Volcker left the New York Federal Reserve Bank to return to Washington as chairman of the Federal Reserve System, he had to accept a salary cut of almost fifty per cent—from a hundred and ten thousand dollars to just under sixty thousand dollars. He lived comfortably but without the ostentatious consumption that the Washington élite often favored. His wife stayed in New York, and he lived alone in Washington in a small apartment not far from the Fed building, and commuted on weekends. Volcker made a fetish of smoking cheap cigars and seeking out inexpensive Chinese restaurants. If someone took him to dinner at one of Washington's glossier places, he would grumble about the prices on the menu.

Not even his harshest critics questioned his integrity. With his résumé and his brilliance, Volcker could easily have tripled or quadrupled his income at any time if he had chosen to go to work at a Wall Street brokerage or bank. Volcker was amply rewarded, however, in a different coin—power. Yet he sounded a trifle old-fashioned, lamenting the fact that so few young people wanted to make the same choice of public service that he had made.

Like Volcker, most other top officials of the Federal Reserve came from modest backgrounds, not from the wealthy Eastern establishment imagined by the conspiracy theorists. Philip E. Coldwell grew up in Urbana, Illinois, where his father was secretary of a Y.M.C.A. Nancy H. Teeters, the only woman on the Board of Governors, was the daughter of a paper-box salesman from Marion, Indiana. J. Charles Partee was from Defiance, Ohio; his father was a mailman. Emmett J. Rice, the only black governor, was the son of a Methodist minister in Washington, D.C.



Henry C. Wallich, a former Yale professor and the scholarly elder of the board, was one exception. As a young man, Wallich had immigrated to the United States from Germany, where his family had long been active in banking. Frederick H. Schultz, the vice-chairman newly appointed by President Carter, was another. Schultz was a wealthy Florida banker and venture capitalist, but, even more unusual, he was a politician who had once served as Democratic speaker of the Florida House of Representatives.

At first, the new chairman of the Federal Reserve Board sounded a lot like the old chairman and the chairman before *him*. An immutable feature of the American political dialogue was that the Federal Reserve chairman delivered the strongest, most eloquent sermons against the dangers of inflation. After Paul Volcker took the oath of office, on August 6, 1979, he continued the tradition, spelling out inflation's evils before the House Budget Committee.

The public, if it was listening, was not thereby persuaded to change its ways. People kept borrowing and buying. The inflation rate was hovering around 13.5 per cent. Consumer debt—loans to buy cars and houses and other items—was growing faster than consumer incomes, and was approaching an all-time peak. The prospect of continuing inflation seemed more reliable than any political promises to stop it.

The question was how far Volcker was willing to push up interest rates. At the first board meeting he presided over as chairman, on August 16th, the seven governors unanimously adopted a historic policy, which in other circumstances might have jarred the markets. They raised the Discount rate from ten per cent to ten and a half—the highest level in the sixty-six-year history of the Federal Reserve System. The Discount rate applied to the hundreds of millions in daily loans made routinely by the twelve Federal Reserve Banks to commercial banks that were temporarily short of reserves. The Discount rate was the floor price of short-term credit. Raising it meant that other short-term interest rates would be likely to go up, too.

As it happened, the financial markets were barely stirred by the action, because they were expecting much more from the new chairman. The governors themselves, however, were divided on how tough the Fed should get. At two successive board meetings in early September, Volcker proposed additional increases in the Discount rate, but he had to back off, because it became clear that he might not have a majority behind him.

Most economists, including the

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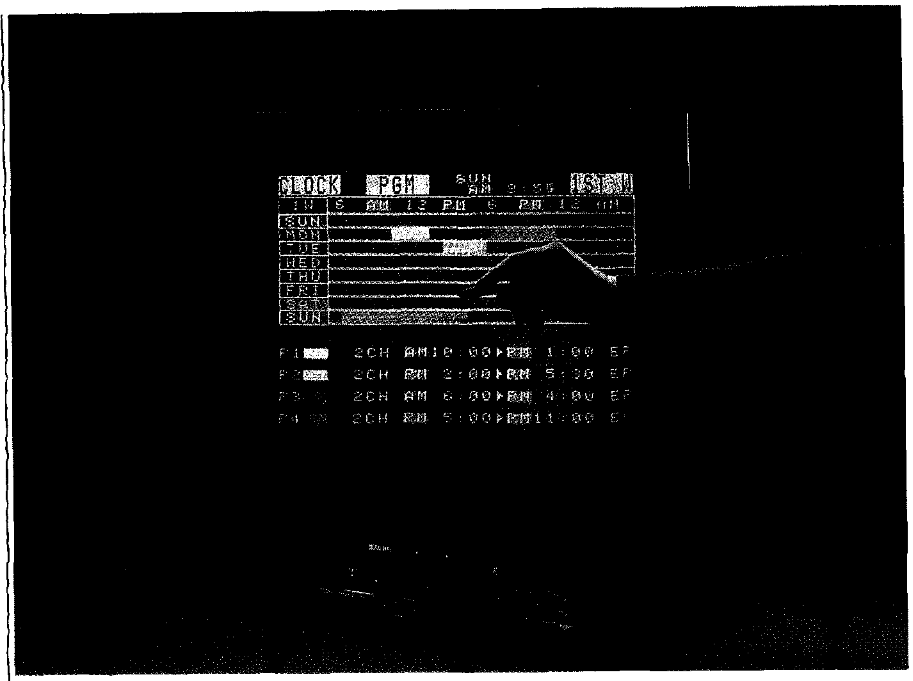
Fed's, were forecasting a recession, but, then, economists had been expecting one for several quarters and they had been wrong. Despite the hardships of inflation, President Carter had presided over one of the longest and most expansive periods of economic growth in postwar history—four years of recovery, starting in 1976. In confidential forecasts for the governors, the Federal Reserve senior staff predicted a deteriorating economy in the third quarter of 1979 and a recession by the Christmas holidays. The contraction of economic activity might last as long as nine months, the Fed staff thought. If the forecast was correct, it was a terrible political portent for the President—a shrinking economy leading right up to the 1980 election. As with most political issues, timing was everything. Naturally, no President would wish for recession, but if recession was inevitable the President might be better off if it occurred sooner rather than later—so that the economy would be growing again in time for the campaign season, and voters would have forgotten the ill effects of unemployment. Earlier in 1979, at least one adviser, Under-Secretary of the Treasury Anthony M. Solomon, had urged President Carter to "take a recession" then and get it over. Otherwise, Solomon had warned, the President would be confronted with both rapid inflation and rising unemployment in the midst of his reëlection campaign. Jimmy Carter ignored the advice. By late summer, the President's options looked much worse. Lyle E. Gramley, a member of the President's Council of Economic Advisers and formerly the research director for the Federal Reserve Board, described the bind confronting the White House policymakers this way: "We face a cruel dilemma. If policy actions are taken to offset slow growth and a rising unemployment rate, we will lose some of the gains we expect on inflation. If we tighten budgetary policy to dampen inflation further, we will lower growth and raise unemployment."

The same trade-off that faced the President's budget policy faced the Federal Reserve's monetary policy. If the Fed tightened credit in order to slow the inflationary wage-and-price spiral, it might also tip the economy into recession. If the Fed failed to tighten credit, inflation would likely grow worse. In public, Paul Volcker did not sound as gloomy as the predictions from the Fed staff did. In private, he was beginning to consider policy options that would provide a sharp brake on inflation, not a gradual deceleration, and he shared his thoughts with a very small circle of insiders. Like a cautious politician preparing for a major campaign, Volcker was testing the political climate inside his own institution. If the chairman was going to lead, he first had to make sure that others would follow.

The internal conflict crystallized for Volcker on September 18th, presenting him with a delicate predicament. The twelve Reserve Bank presidents came to town for the regular meeting of the Federal Open Market Committee and joined the seven governors at a huge mahogany table in the boardroom. By meeting time, they had all digested the voluminous staff reports on the economy, including the most important one, called the "blue book," which described the policy choices. Through the morning, each governor or president would have a turn to speak, even though only five of the bank presidents would have a vote. Usually after a lunch break, the chairman would offer a proposition and the twelve members of the F.O.M.C. would announce their votes.

It was clear that the financial markets expected the Fed to raise interest rates. The question was: How much higher? After much discussion, a majority of the committee voted to raise the upper limit of the Federal Funds rate a quarter of a point—from 11.50 per cent to 11.75 per cent. Given the roaring pressures of inflation, this was hardly more than a nudge. The vote was eight to four, because several committee members thought the policy too soft. Three of the F.O.M.C.'s "hawks"—Governor Philip Coldwell, John Balles, the president of the San Francisco Reserve Bank, and Robert Black, the president of the Richmond Fed—entered dissents, on the ground that the Fed should tighten credit more aggressively. The Federal Funds rate should be pushed up to twelve per cent, they argued, or the money supply would continue to expand excessively. One other governor, Emmett Rice, dissented in the opposite direction, insisting that further tightening, even a quarter of a per cent, might be too much for the economy.

After the F.O.M.C. finished its business, the seven governors reconvened in a meeting of the Board of Governors to consider the prerogative the Reserve Bank presidents did not share with it: the power to set the



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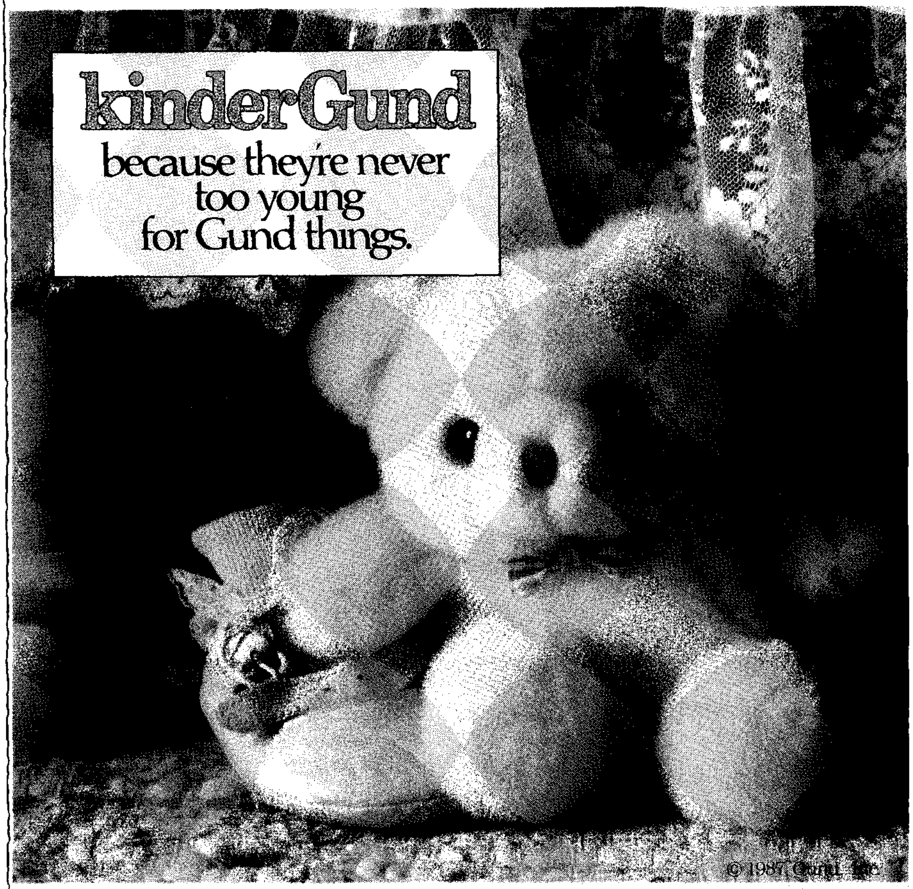

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Discount rate, the rate that the Fed charged for its short-term-liquidity loans to banks. On this occasion, the governors were split, too—four to three. They voted to increase the rate, from ten and a half to eleven per cent—only, this time the dissenters were all pulling in the other direction. Governors Nancy Teeters, Charles Partee, and Rice—the board's "doves," or liberal members—argued together for no change at all. "More time was needed," they asserted, according to the official report, "to assess current uncertainties in the economic outlook and the impact of increasing restraint . . . over the course of recent months."

For the new chairman, the situation resembled a squeeze play. One faction insisted that the Fed must get tougher with the economy, and the other feared that it might be too tough already.

Paul Volcker said later that he was not especially upset by the closeness of the vote on the Discount increase, but the financial markets were. The reaction from Wall Street the next day interpreted it as a defeat for him. Short-term interest rates fell sharply as investors concluded that the Fed under Volcker would be less aggressive than they had expected—that the dissenters would keep him from any future increases.

IN the last half of September, the Fed's assumptions about imminent recession were refuted by the new data on economic output coming in from the Commerce Department. Despite all the forecasts, the economy wasn't tipping into a contraction—it was accelerating again. And, despite the Fed's gradual efforts to slow things down with measured increases in interest rates, the banking system was accelerating its lending. Bank credit was expanding at an annual rate close to twenty per cent, and Fed officials heard from worried bankers that a lot of that new credit was going into speculative ventures. Businesses and individuals were borrowing in order to buy things on the rising prices—speculative investments ranging from gold and silver to real estate. They were betting that inflation would drive prices much higher. The smart speculator could then sell the commodities or other tangibles, repay the loans, and reap a quick profit.

Speculation did not look like a risky bet, for the over-all inflation rate was near thirteen per cent, and the price of oil was increasing at an alarming rate of more than six per cent a month—an annual rate of nearly eighty per cent. Gold had jumped twenty-eight per cent in value in a single month, and reached a new record of $413 an ounce. In the same period, the price of silver had nearly doubled, and was now selling for more than $16 an ounce.

"The spectre of 1929 was raised by me and others," Philip Coldwell recalled later. "I said, 'Look, we're on the verge of going into a hyperinflation in the United States.' " Other governors, particularly Henry Wallich, who as a boy had lived through Germany's hyperinflation in the nineteen-twenties, thought such talk was exaggerated. Still, Wallich told his colleagues, "I used to say that I never, never thought this could happen in the United States. But now I only say one 'never.' "

It was in this atmosphere of anxiety that the Federal Reserve chairman began to call on the other governors, one by one, to try out a new idea. Early in the month, Volcker had directed the senior staff to begin technical studies on changing the Fed's basic operating

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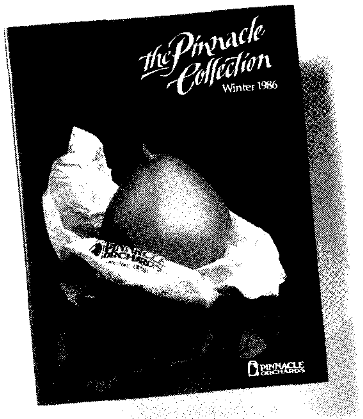

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method, and after the embarrassment of the board's four-to-three vote on September 18th he pushed the idea more aggressively. Some of his colleagues were taken aback. The new chairman was not merely advocating a fundamental change in the way the Federal Open Market Committee regulated the money supply. He was proposing, of all things, a monetarist solution—the approach advocated by the Fed's angriest critics.

When Volcker dropped by Henry Wallich's office, Wallich, a stalwart "hawk" on the Fed board, told him politely but bluntly that he opposed the proposition. He explained his objections. The Federal Open Market Committee ought to tighten money and credit dramatically, but not by adopting any risky new operating system, which would create its own disorders. The monetarists had long urged the Fed to abandon its preoccupation with the level of interest rates and, instead, concentrate solely on the money supply and the level of reserves that the Fed provided for the banking system. Interest rates would then be allowed to rise or fall automatically in reaction. Wallich thought that this method of operation would lead to extreme swings in interest rates, which would destabilize the financial markets and the real economy.

"If you make interest rates automatic, you have no influence over where they are," Wallich later recounted. Wallich's objections were grounded in the principles of money regulation, not in any sympathy for financial traders. In the basic equation, supply and demand combined to determine the price of money. If the Federal Reserve insisted on holding one of those variables constant—the supply of money—then the other two variables would fluctuate wildly in direct response to each other. An increased demand for credit in the private economy would drive interest rates up swiftly. The higher rates would in turn force buyers and borrowers to retreat—collapsing the demand for credit and sending interest rates down sharply again. The sudden descent in the price of money would then pull people and businesses back into credit markets again—and the roller coaster would start upward anew.

That day in his office, Wallich told Volcker, "It's a pact with the devil."

Volcker replied, "Sometimes you have to deal with the devil."

When Volcker called on Philip

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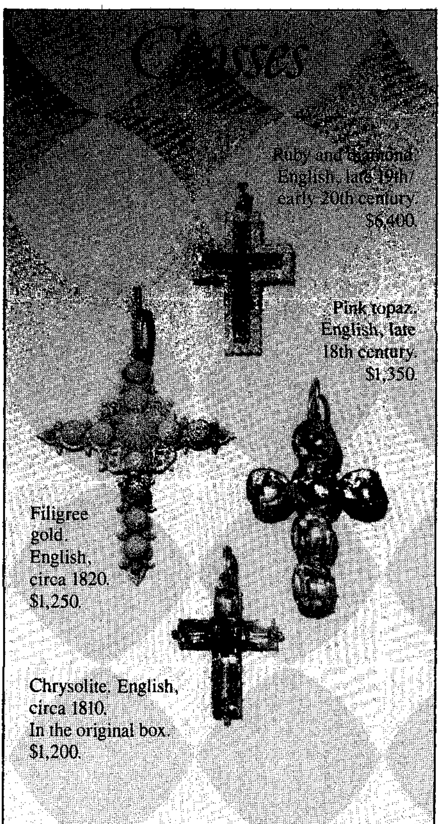

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Coldwell, another committed "hawk," he found him as negative as Wallich. Coldwell could hardly believe that the new chairman, who he knew was not a true believer, was seriously advocating a monetarist scheme. "Paul, I don't understand," he recalls saying. "You want to shift to a monetarist control?"

Volcker said that he did.

"Well, I don't have any sympathy with that at all. It kind of binds our hands. It keeps us from making policy judgments."

Volcker insisted that he wanted to try it.

Volcker explained years later that he would have been content not to change anything fundamental but simply to continue the Fed's orthodox approach—tightening credit by pushing interest rates up sharply. But he faced an internal political dilemma: members like Coldwell and Wallich were willing, even eager, to drive up interest rates and halt the inflationary spiral, but others, like Partee and Teeters and Rice, were much more hesitant to vote directly for such drastic action. Could Volcker assemble a sustainable majority that would vote to raise interest rates two points or more? And keep them there? Would the F.O.M.C. members have the nerve, if it was needed, to push up interest rates by three or four points? Nothing so dramatic had ever been executed by Fed policymakers in the past. The answer seemed obvious.

"We could have just tightened," Volcker acknowledged later, "but I would probably have had trouble getting policy as much tighter as it needed to be. I could have lived with a more orthodox tightening, but I saw some value in changing the parameters of the way we did things."

The monetarist alternative offered a clever solution to Volcker's internal political dilemma: it would serve as a veil to cloak the tough decisions. If the Federal Open Market Committee declared publicly that it was no longer pegging its policy on interest rates but, rather, on the level of M-1, that would conceal its hand and perhaps deflect public attacks when interest rates rose sharply. Fed members could explain, disingenuously, that the rising interest rates were attributable to "market pressures." In a narrow sense, that would be correct, but ultimately the market pressures that drove up the interest rates would derive from the Federal Reserve's own actions to tighten the supply of reserves.

Traditionally, the Fed, like all cen-

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tral banks, had been concerned with stability—with avoiding horrendous zigzags in interest rates which might send wrong messages through the entire economy. But that was the past. Paul Volcker, though he had been schooled as an open-market trader in the Fed bureaucracy and shared its solicitude for "orderly markets," now wanted to accomplish the opposite: he wanted to jolt the banks and financial markets, even put a little fear in their hearts. If Wall Street had lost faith in the Fed's will to control inflation, how could he convince it that the will existed? If money-market traders and cynical speculators had become persuaded that the Federal Reserve lacked the resolve to end the inflationary spiral, what message would change their minds? An abrupt change in the operating method, such as would disrupt the financial markets' comfortable assumptions about interest-rate stability, might serve as a therapeutic shock treatment—an exercise in creative uncertainty.

When Volcker called on other governors, all these elements were made part of his larger argument: Sufficiently dramatic action by the Federal Reserve might produce an important psychological victory. If the financial markets were convinced that at last the Fed was prepared to get tough and stay tough on controlling money, the investors who were demanding an "inflation premium" on interest rates to protect themselves against future inflation might change their thinking. Thus, Volcker argued, the drastic action would certainly push up interest rates across the lending spectrum—both for short-term credit and for long-term investments like corporate and government bonds. But if the markets became more optimistic about the long-range prospects for curbing inflation, then long-term interest rates should drop to more normal levels.

(The chairman's hopes for a psychological victory would be largely disappointed by reality. The financial markets and banks were indeed shocked by Volcker's scheme, but long-term interest rates did not subside. On the contrary, long-term rates would be bid to the highest levels in this century and maintained there for many years. Volcker and his colleagues also thought originally that they might have to push short-term rates as high as sixteen per cent. In the event, the new operating system would propel those rates to twenty per cent, and eventually even higher. In fact,

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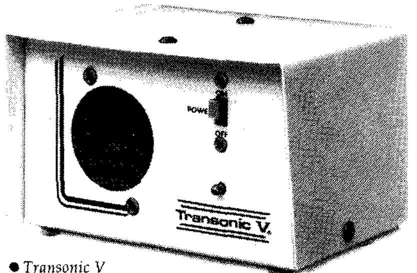

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ON the last Friday of the month, September 28th, the seven governors assembled in the chairman's office—where they would attract less attention than in the boardroom—to thrash out the final details. Only a few of the senior staff members were included. If even a hint leaked out before the chairman was ready to move, it would send wild rumors through the financial markets. The governors all agreed to support the shift to a new operating method, but many questions about how it would operate remained to be settled. The chairman was confident that he could sell the idea to the Federal Open Market Committee when it next met. He had discussed the proposal with two or three of the twelve Reserve Bank presidents by telephone, but the others had no idea of what was in the works. Volcker did not worry about getting their support. Given the enthusiasm for monetarism, most Reserve Bank presidents would be delighted that the home office was finally coming around to their way of thinking.

At the White House, neither President Carter nor his advisers had any idea that the Federal Reserve was preparing a major departure in monetary policy, intended to deliver a psychological shock to the nation's financial system.

The next day, the Federal Reserve chairman boarded a plane for Europe, where he was to attend the annual conference of the International Monetary Fund, in Belgrade. At first, Volcker had wanted to skip the I.M.F. meeting, because he was so busy with details of the operating shift and so eager to move quickly to carry it out. Other Fed officials persuaded him to go. The I.M.F. conference drew the finance ministers and central bankers of the world, the representatives of a hundred and thirty-eight nations, rich and poor, and it would look very odd if the new chairman of America's central bank did not attend. The airplane was the Secretary of the Treasury's jet, and the other passengers included Volcker's predecessor as Fed chairman, G. William Miller, who was now at Treasury, and Charles L. Schultze, a liberal economist, who was the chairman of President Carter's Council of Economic Advisers. Crossing the Atlantic, Volcker took the occasion to inform these Carter Admin-

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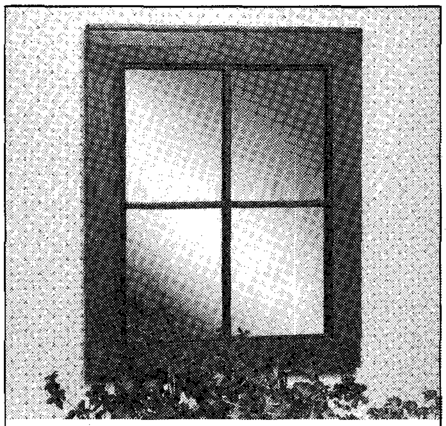

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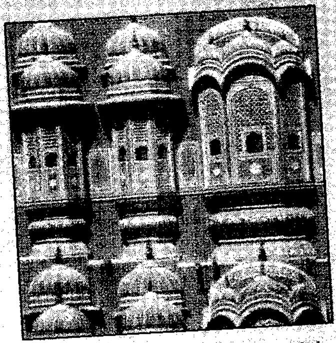

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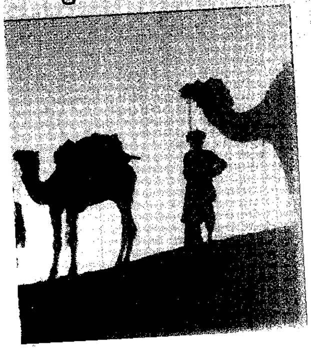

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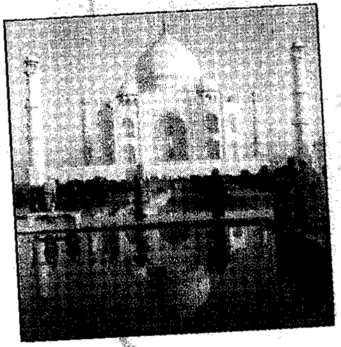

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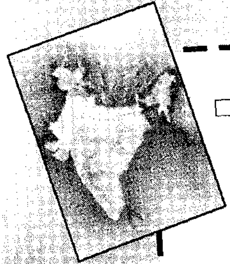

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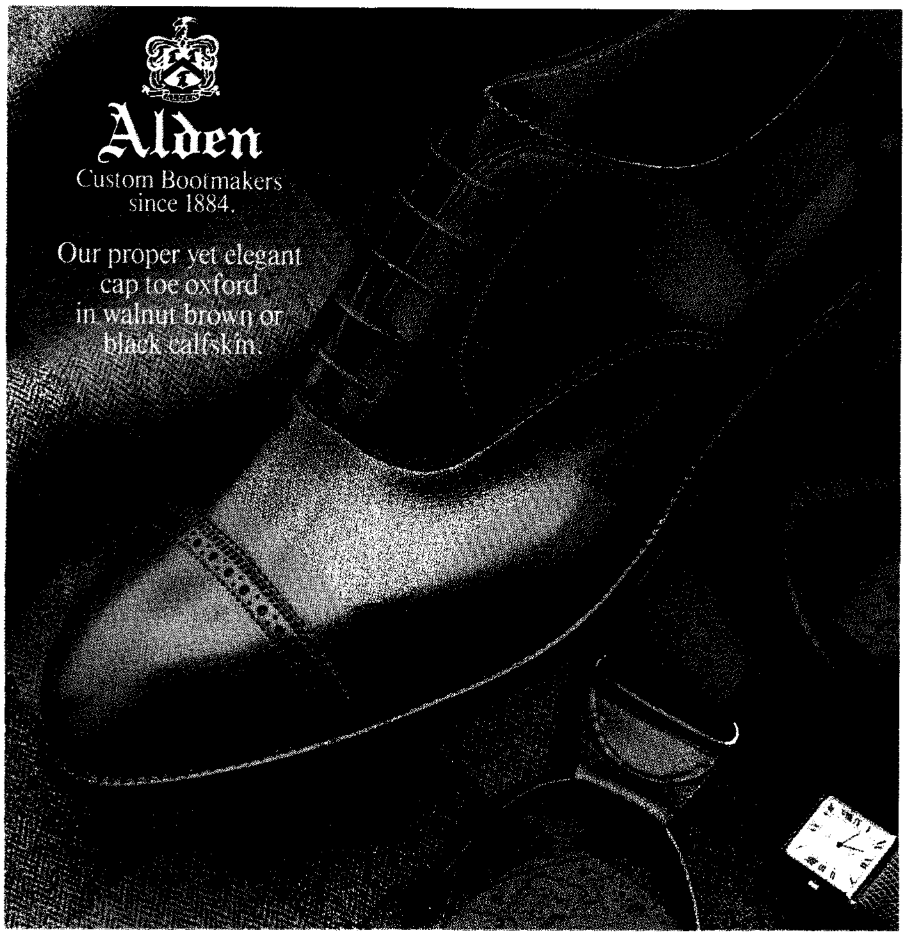
istration officials about how he intended to change things at the Federal Reserve.

Both men were immediately hostile to the idea. They agreed that the Federal Reserve must do more to tighten the supply of money and credit, but they argued against the change in the operating method which Volcker was preparing. Miller complained that if the Fed began targeting reserves directly it would produce more volatility in interest rates, and the sharp fluctuations in credit costs would disrupt the economy and might actually exacerbate inflation. Schultze had more fundamental objections: the new operating system would lock the Fed in, set it on a course from which it could not turn back, and that course would lead, sooner or later, to recession. No one in the conversation needed to point out that next year was 1980 and Jimmy Carter would be running for reëlection.

Volcker listened to the arguments and said, "I'll think it over." When they all returned to Washington, he promised, the Administration would have a full opportunity to react to the details of his plan before the Fed took action. Volcker believed, however, that changing the operating method was a technical issue of monetary policy—a question that in the end only the Fed itself could decide.

Under the law, the Federal Reserve chairman had no formal obligation to tell the White House anything or to take into account any objections to his actions. As a practical matter of politics, however, Volcker needed to know how the Carter White House might react. If the President should attack him when interest rates shot up, and be joined by a chorus of angry representatives and senators, Volcker's initiative might become mired in partisan controversy. "They're entitled to know what we are doing, if they play the game, and don't double-cross you by leaking it," Volcker explained later. "You've got a direct interest in finding out how they feel. You want to know if there is going to be opposition or not. It just might affect the credibility of the action and the sustainability of the action." The boundaries of the relationship between the Federal Reserve and the rest of the federal government were vague and subjective, determined by political judgment. Before taking any action, the Fed chairman had to evaluate the situation, much the way any elected politician had to measure his potential opposition before committing himself to a major



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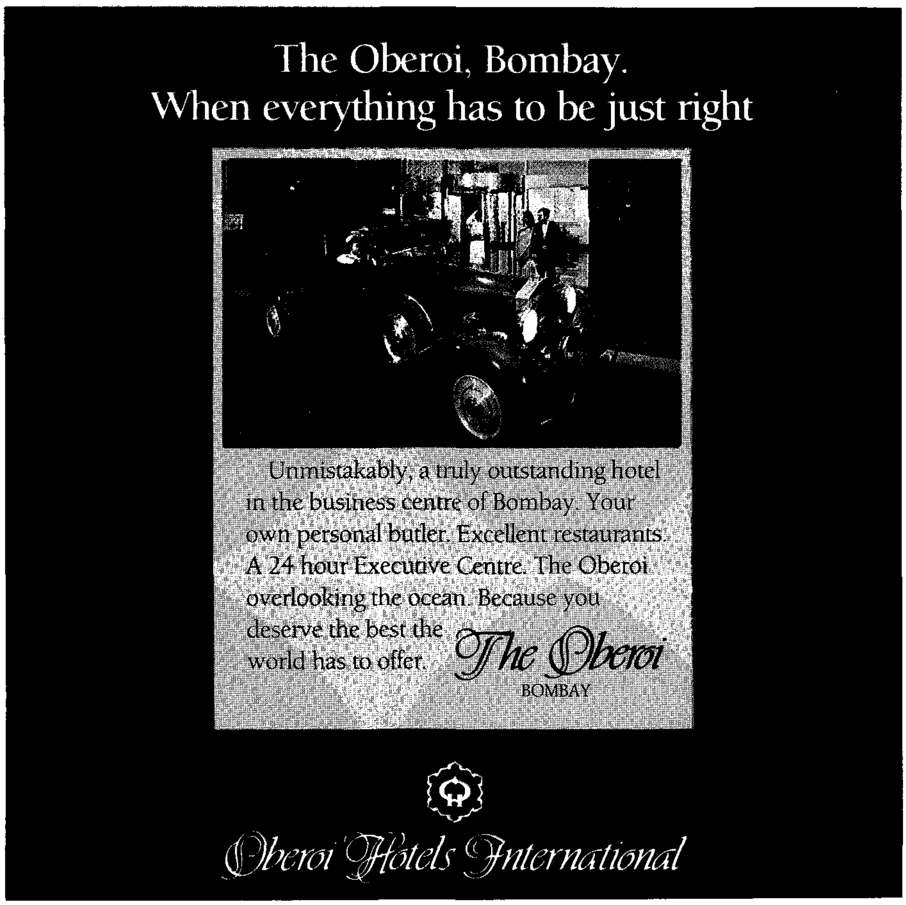

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issue or a new campaign. The Federal Reserve could act independently, but how far should it go? At what point would it provoke such a powerful political reaction that, ultimately, it could be stripped of its cherished independence?

Volcker later told a reporter, "On day-to-day matters, you can forget about what an Administration thinks, but the Federal Reserve as an institution has to operate within some broad parameters of what people can understand and support. You just can't cut a hundred and eighty degrees across everything that other people understand. They have to know your purpose and understand the reason if some pain is involved, even if they don't agree in every detail. If you are outside that vague consensus, you're in trouble."

The Carter policymakers on the Treasury Secretary's jet were unhappy with Volcker's plans, but at least they agreed that something dramatic had to be done to halt the inflationary momentum. En route to Belgrade, the plane stopped in Hamburg, and there Volcker's sense of urgency received an influential endorsement. The American officials sat through a stern lecture from Chancellor Helmut Schmidt of West Germany on the need for stronger monetary measures.

When the delegation arrived at the I.M.F. conference, Volcker and the others heard the same message, in the strongest terms, in conversations with the central bankers and finance ministers of Western Europe: the dollar was still sliding in value on international exchange markets, and the United States must act forcefully to reverse the decline.

Volcker left early. He had discussed his plans for a major policy shift in elliptical terms with several of his closest friends among the other central bankers, and he saw no point in staying longer. On Monday, with the conference still under way, he departed for Washington—a move that touched off intense speculation and price gyrations in the financial markets of Europe and the United States.

Among Wall Street insiders, the sequence of events in Belgrade created an enduring myth about Volcker's motivation. It came to be believed that the Fed chairman was so jarred by the complaints of European financiers that he rushed home to do something drastic. This interpretation of events was mistaken in the particulars—it was before attending the I.M.F. conference that Volcker had made his decision to

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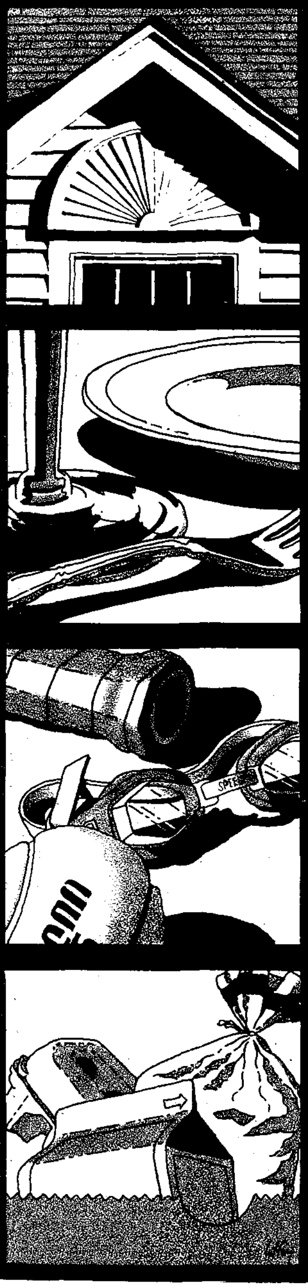

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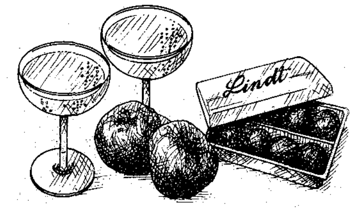

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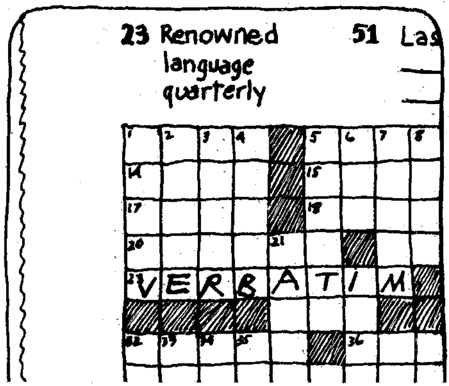

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act—but not in the larger sense. The American government had been pounded for many months by the leading voices of international finance, both American and European, demanding a halt to the dollar's decline in international exchange, and the Federal Reserve responded more sensitively to this constituency than elected politicians did.

The weakening dollar was in one sense beneficial for the United States economy. It gave American exporters an enormous edge in competition with foreign producers, an artificial price advantage in international markets that ranged from agriculture to heavy manufacturing. That meant greater United States output and more jobs. Foreign governments naturally complained—some accused the United States of debasing its currency deliberately in order to grab a larger share of global markets.

But while American exporters benefitted, the most influential institutions of international finance suffered proportionately—particularly the multinational bankers, both American and foreign, who dealt worldwide in dollar-denominated transactions. The depreciating dollar meant that their dollar assets were steadily losing value. For instance, the largest United States banks had lent tens of billions to the developing nations of Latin America, and these loans were all pegged to the dollar. When the dollar declined in international exchange, the real value of the international loans automatically declined, reducing the debt burden for foreign borrowers just as domestic inflation eased it for buyers of homes in the United States. Multinational lenders lost for the same reason that creditors at home were losing.

For obvious political reasons, Federal Reserve officials tried to play down the importance of international finance in forcing their hand. A frontal attack against domestic inflation might be widely welcomed by the American public, even if it required some pain, but raising interest rates sharply in order to save the assets of the money-center banks and other global financiers would hardly be a popular cause. In any case, the two motives resulted in the same monetary policy: the Fed could not confront domestic inflation without also affecting the international value of the dollar.

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interest rates, was obvious to economists: if supply is tightened, interest rates go up. It was not so obvious to many non-economists, including the President of the United States. In fact, Volcker kidded the Administration economists on this point. Charles Schultze has recalled, "Paul said to us, 'It was really a meeting with Jimmy Carter that gave me the idea. Carter said to me, "Why can't you control the quantity of credit without raising interest rates?" ' Volcker told us that's what gave him the idea of targeting money supply instead of interest rates." Volcker's remark was facetious, of course—an inside joke among professionals about a layman's ignorance of the fundamentals.

Jimmy Carter, like all his modern predecessors, did not have a strong grasp of the issues of monetary policy. Nothing in the experience of American political leaders prepared them to deal with the subject; the tradition of Fed independence encouraged the notion that money regulation was something to be left to the experts—a forbidden area, where politicians were not supposed to tread. Richard Nixon, who was as well trained for the Chief Executive's job as any modern President, reminisced years later that one of his greatest regrets was that he had never mastered an understanding of what went on at the Federal Reserve. Most of the politicians who served in the White House, and in Congress as well, could make a similar confession. Anthony Solomon once reflected, "No President really understands these things, but the disturbing thing about Carter was that he tried to use the economic jargon as though he did. He tried to make it seem that he understood the technical arguments when he clearly didn't. A President like Lyndon Johnson never pretended to understand all these things—he was only interested in the bottom line. He would ask, What were the political effects? What would happen to interest rates? What did he have to do in order to deal with it? Carter would enter into technical discussions that he only partly understood."

In the event, when Schultze and Miller informed Carter of Volcker's plan the President declined to do anything in response. Resistance was not possible, Carter told his advisers, given his own weakened political status. The White House had no choice but to acquiesce. The President could not challenge a new economic policy determined independently by the chair-

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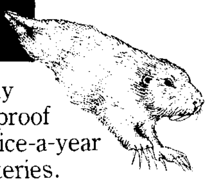

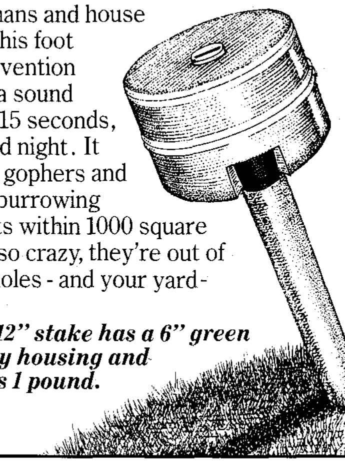

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man of the Federal Reserve Board. Besides, Stuart Eizenstat, the Carter aide, noted, "The President is basically a very honest guy who believes in the integrity of the political system. He had put that guy in there and, by God, he was going to stand by him."

Volcker listened to Schultze's last-minute arguments, but decided to proceed. Schultze later explained, "The Fed held all the cards. Unemployment was down and inflation was rising. The general structure of political power was such that all the business and financial community was solidly behind the Fed. The dollar was shaky. The White House had to be very careful about taking on the Fed. Unless it literally wanted to take on a populist campaign that would drive the dollar down even further, we had to be very careful."

Two months earlier, Carter had chosen Paul Volcker almost by accident. Now the President was implicitly surrendering control to him. In the course of challenging the inflationary spiral, Volcker and the Federal Reserve would prove to be more powerful, more effective, than any element of the elected government in Washington. In the tidal wave that followed, millions of Americans would lose jobs, homes, farms, family savings, hope. For others, the transformation would create new opportunities and new fortunes. Virtually every American—indeed, the entire world—would be directly affected.

—William Greider

(*This is the first part of a three-part article.*)

•

The imbroglio with Wells, though one rather flinches from reading any more about it, could hardly fail to lack dramatic interest.—*John Gross in the Times.*

We've had imbroglios like that.

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THE SKY LINE

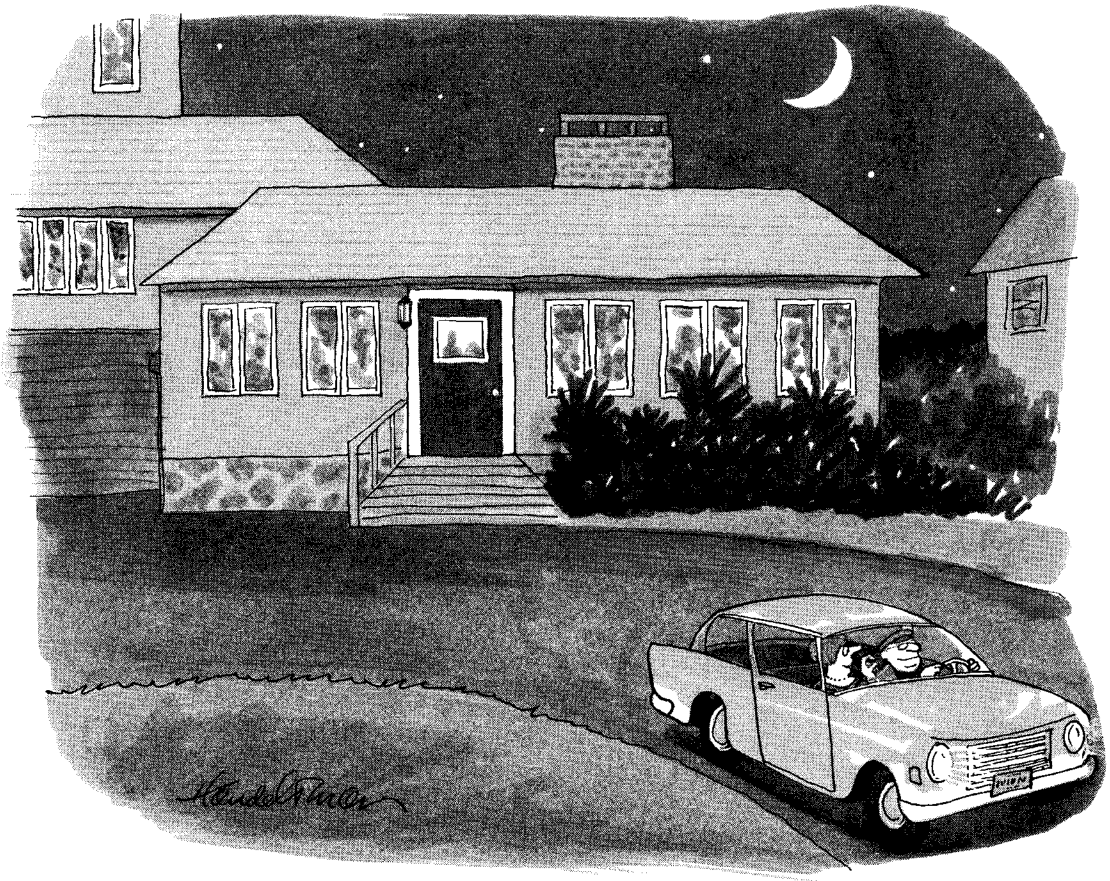
On the Brink

IN the decades that have passed since the end of the Second World War, New York City is generally acknowledged to have become the greatest city on earth. Superlatives tend to be more or less vulgar approximations of a sensed but untestable condition; within the limits of that proviso, the common assertion of New York's preëminence strikes me as a convincing one, and it introduces an irony painful in what it implies—the irony that at the very moment of achieving our worldwide urban superiority we New Yorkers appear bent upon acting in such a way as to destroy it. I am aware of how easy it is to be a doomsayer—in the long run, *every* prediction of disaster is apt to come true—but in the history of the city a point has been reached at which even those professional Pollyannas who publicly find reason to praise the current municipal administration shake their heads in private and wonder how long we can go on deliberately mismanaging our affairs. And in this instance I have in mind not the astounding revelations of political corruption which make headlines on an almost daily basis but the problems that lie beneath and behind those revelations and are in part the occasion for them. They are problems on a classic scale, which we are accustomed to speculate about as among the possible causes of the decline and fall of ancient Rome but do not readily think of in connection with, say, mitigating the squalor of Times Square or preventing a skyscraper from casting its shadow in perpetuity over the fields and wooded dells of Central Park.

Although I will be speaking here mostly about Manhattan, I intend my statements to embrace the city as a whole. It is notoriously difficult for journalists (to say nothing of New Yorkers en masse) to remember that the city consists of five boroughs, of which Manhattan is only the most conspicuous. As a setting for short stories and novels, and as an immediately recognizable iconographic object in movies and on TV, Manhattan is the part that stands symbolically for the whole. I remember that in the early postwar era farms were being tilled in the so-called "outer" boroughs (and there were flocks of sheep and goats grazing on Staten Island), but in Manhattan the bucolic notes that continued to be struck were few and eccentric. We were able to play tennis on open-air courts on Park Avenue at Thirty-ninth Street, where adverse economic conditions had long delayed the building of a skyscraper, and we could admire the leafy, ample grounds that Mrs. Marcellus Hartley Dodge provided for pets behind her ugly brick house on Fifth Avenue at Sixty-first Street; otherwise, Manhattan was then, as it is today, the most intensely urban of the boroughs, which is to say that—hard-driving, short-tempered, romantic, and hazardous—it is New York City distilled and concentrated.

The irony that the greatest of cities is mindlessly threatening to destroy itself is matched by another irony: that the city has never looked so well at a moment when it has never been so ill. Despite the ever-rising tide of rubbish in our streets, the perennially erupting and long-unmended potholes, the Everests of garbage, the acres of burned-out slums, the rats, the roaches, the din, the rude buffetings of crowds, and the risk of becoming fresh street kill under the wheels of speed-besotted cyclists and motorists, the city retains its age-old power to bewitch us—to impose upon us a plausible allegation of desirability. For it has, after all, against every expectation, its beauty. Seen from the harbor at dusk on a summer evening, it leaps up out of the sea as Venice leaps up out of its lilac-colored lagoons, and, in a truly Venetian defiance of reason, demands of us, "Am I not, with my towers and spires and my millions of lights ablaze, as irresistible as ever? Then why should anyone vex himself and his neighbors with gloomy predictions about my future?"

One answer to this question is that few New Yorkers would willingly turn their vulnerable but still effectual city into a lovely ruinous archaism. The inability of Venice to survive as



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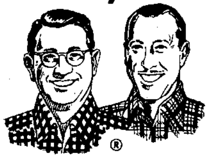

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an authentic urban presence long ago led it to become a gorgeous Renaissance Disneyland, supported by trippers; its brute commercial strength and intellectual glories were reduced to picturesque posturings. Tourism is already one of the chief sources of revenue for New York City, and there is pressure to increase that revenue by permitting the introduction of gambling casinos here—in effect, to turn a near-Venice into a near-Vegas. This unwelcome disimprovement would mean an explosion of gaudy casino architecture like that which has sprung up in Atlantic City, patronized by characters whom it would be kind to call Runyonesque and who pay little attention to the salubrious sea breezes that blow across the boardwalk of that gangster-tainted resort. New York City deserves to be spared any such fate, but the manipulations of the wheeler-dealers now making decisions in our behalf tempt us as ordinary citizens to throw up our hands and resign ourselves to silent despair. We know that the city is endangered—we know, indeed, that it is capable of dying—but our knowledge induces in most of us not an impulse to act but a kind of self-protective paralysis, as if to do nothing were more prudent than to do something. But what, after all, ought we as citizens to do? What *can* we do?

Well, for one thing, we can go to court. Of the many alarming architectural projects that have been undertaken in this city over the past several years, two of the biggest and most objectionable are the New York State Urban Development Corporation's grotesquely overscaled plan for the rebuilding—and purported rehabilitation—of Forty-second Street at Times Square and a scheme for the construction at Columbus Circle of a no less grotesquely overscaled skyscraper, so designed as to obliterate much of the open sky now visible from Central Park and nearby streets. Both projects have been the occasion for lawsuits, and such lawsuits usually have the advantage, from the point of view of the parties bringing them, of slowing things down and thereby gaining time for people to have second and third thoughts and for circumstances to alter, sometimes in surprising ways.

IN one form or another, the Forty-second Street project has been on the drawing boards for a number of years. It is and always has been pri-

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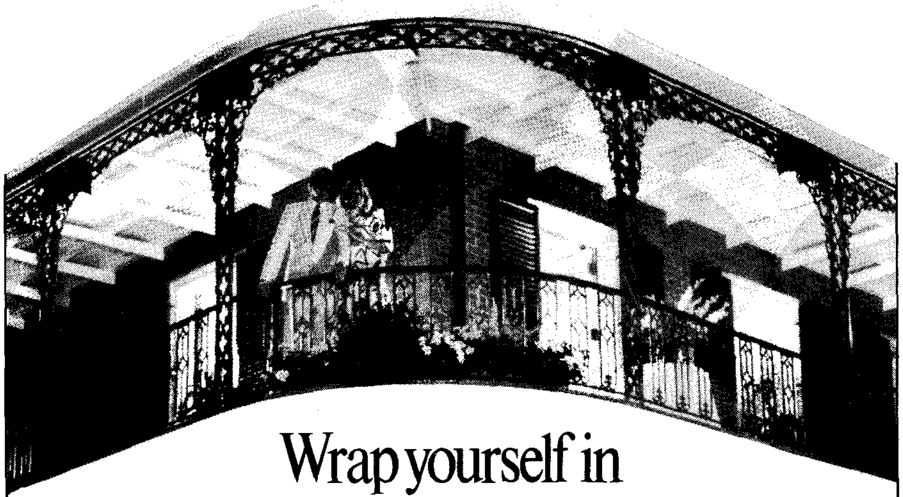
marily a real-estate speculation, structured by a powerful public agency to favor a few chosen developers, who would gain the necessary local approvals partly by hypocritically claiming to be engaged in cleaning up Times Square. They would certainly be cleaning up, but not in the fashion that we have been invited to applaud. In the course of replacing "grind-house" movie theatres, fast-food shops, cut-rate radio and TV retail shops, and pornographic peep shows with skyscraping office towers far greater in bulk than the present laws allow, hundreds of millions of dollars of profits would end up in the developers' pockets. As for the deplorable social evils—prostitution male and female, drug-peddling, mugging, and the like—that infest the area, especially the block of Forty-second Street that lies between Seventh and Eighth Avenues, they would be driven into the theatre district to the north. There the process of demolition and construction would be repeated, again with profit to property owners and builders, and again with little or no effect on the prevalence of practices that go back to Nineveh and Tyre. What developers are quick to describe as "human sleaze" would be forced to migrate again, this time westward, into the old brownstone restaurant-and-residence district known as Clinton. Once Clinton was destroyed in the name of doing good, the sleaze would presumably be driven into the Hudson River and the problem would cease to exist.

I would argue that the cold-blooded scenario I have sketched is by no means a fiction. In however disguised a fashion, it was intended to be well under way by now; only the need to dispose of several inconveniently prolonged lawsuits has kept the Urban Development Corporation and its chosen developers from throwing down buildings at Seventh Avenue and Forty-second Street and erecting in their place four gigantic office towers, designed by the architects John Burgee and Philip Johnson. I have yet to hear a single person speak admiringly of these structures, which are expected to range in height from thirty-one to fifty-eight stories and are exceptionally repellent not only in bulk but also in the silliness of their French Empire detailing (fake-mansard roofs, surmounted by pretentious iron crestings). In New York City, the permissible size of a building in relation to its site is determined by something called



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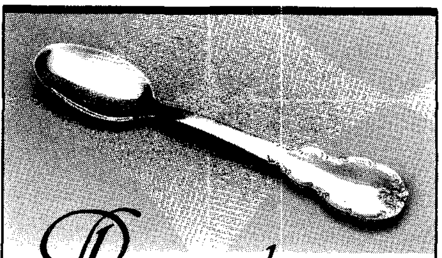
the F.A.R., or floor-area ratio, which is calculated to permit different densities in different parts of the city—high densities in the Wall Street area, for example, and low densities in residential areas. An F.A.R. of, say, fifteen would mean that a building was allowed to contain fifteen times the square footage in floor space of the site upon which it stood. Other considerations, such as the purchase of air rights over adjacent properties or the dedication of ground-floor space to public use (our so-called "plazas") may modify the basic F.A.R. to an owner's advantage. (The Urban Development Corporation, like many other agencies created by the legislature, is not obliged to conform with the city's zoning resolution; nevertheless, it has made an effort not to appear to be above the law.) Thanks to a formula that, as far as I know, had never been used before, which allowed all areas within the boundaries of the thirteen-acre project to be dealt with as a single building site, the Burgee-Johnson towers were granted densities greater than any other New York City buildings had ever been permitted to possess. The current maximum F.A.R. for the Times Square area is eighteen and is reckoned to be too high; it is soon to be reduced, perhaps to fifteen. The Burgee-Johnson tower planned for the northeast corner of Forty-second Street and Broadway would occupy a site of thirty-three thousand square feet and would contain a million and a half square feet of space—an F.A.R. of forty-five!

Given its location at the center of overcrowded, over-built-upon Manhattan, Times Square at present is a remarkably open and airy space, from which much sky is visible; sunlight readily penetrates the skeletal frames of the great illuminated signs for which it is celebrated—signs that perch on buildings modest in height and agreeably ramshackle in appearance. G. K. Chesterton said once of the gaudy bedazzlement of Times Square at night that it would be a paradise for anyone lucky enough to be unable to read; that quality of bedazzlement, of honky-tonk high spirits, is about to be extinguished forever by an unbroken fortress wall of monstrous commercial structures, of which the Minskoff building and the hulking and inimical Marriott Marquis Hotel on the western edge of the square are only the first installments. With the Burgee-Johnson towers to the south and new towers of equal or greater size



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on its eastern and northern borders—eight major sites are either being excavated or have buildings under construction upon them at this very moment—the square will come to resemble the bottom of a well, sunless in winter and without cooling breezes in summer. Since most of the new buildings will be rented out as corporate offices, they will be empty and dark after six; as a sop to sentimental preservationists, a certain amount of tasteful signage will be appliquéd to the masonry façades of the buildings—a parody of Chesterton's lost paradise.

NEARLY all the lawsuits that have stalled the Forty-second Street project have ended in defeat for the plaintiffs. A citizen lawsuit (in which I am one of seven plaintiffs), brought pursuant to the Federal Clean Air Act, alleges that the defendants in the suit—among them the chairman of the Urban Development Corporation, the United States Environmental Protection Agency, Mayor Edward Koch, and Governor Mario Cuomo—have failed in their legal duty to achieve compliance with the act. This suit was dismissed in the United States District Court of the Southern District of New York and is now under appeal in the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit; it looks as though the earliest that a decision will be handed down will be in 1988. Whatever the outcome, the suit has indirectly served a useful purpose, for with the passing of time the circumstances that the Urban Development Corporation and its political supporters cited as justifying the high cost of the project have altered beyond recognition.

The sorry stretch of West Forty-second Street between Seventh and Eighth Avenues remains an undiminished misery to those who frequent it, but no one can any longer pretend that the Urban Development Corporation's grandiose proposals are indispensable to its improvement. The area used to be described as an economic wasteland, incapable of being developed without huge public subsidies in the form of tax abatements and other more or less invisible long-term emoluments; in the light of the feverish real-estate activity now taking place in and around Times Square, one cannot speak seriously of wastelands, tax abatements, and a seductive unprecedented juggling of F.A.R.s. The value of the land involved in the project is probably three times as great today as it was a couple of years ago; the financial arrange-

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ments drawn up between the U. D. C. and the private developers, overgenerous to begin with, have become patently outrageous. (It has been estimated that the developers would receive as much as a billion dollars in tax abatements over a period of fifteen years.) But no question of renegotiating the terms of the project need arise as a result of this unpredicted transformation; the reasons given for so handsomely rewarding the developers of the project having vanished, the project itself should vanish. That is my view of the matter, but I ought to note that it is not the view of the U. D. C., which, with a great show of confidence, maintains that the project is moving ahead nicely. Of course there will have to be certain major changes in the program, but no matter. A layman might argue that some of the proposed changes make the project appear even more plainly a flat-out commercial enterprise than it was at the beginning, but again no matter. Action is called for, says the U. D. C., not more courtroom palavering and futile delay.

To that end, a few weeks ago the corporation called a public hearing to announce certain changes in its plans—changes that would hasten the processes of condemnation and demolition but that were, it suggested, so trifling as not to require the corporation to return to the Board of Estimate for still another vote of approval. To adversaries of the project, the changes appeared far from trifling: they included a change in the stipulated use of the site on the southwest corner of Forty-second Street and Eighth Avenue from a computer and apparel mart to an unrestricted wholesale mart—which the Kennedy family, owners of the Merchandise Mart, in Chicago, was said to be interested in establishing—and, under certain conditions, to another use entirely; and a change in the process of condemnation, permitting it to be carried out on a piecemeal basis instead of at a single stroke. On the morning of this public hearing, State Senator Franz Leichter and City Council Members Carol Greitzer and Ruth Messinger held a press conference on the steps of City Hall and declared that the Urban Development Corporation was opening itself up to a lawsuit unless it did indeed return to the Board of Estimate for a renewed approval. As a result of the press conference, Mayor Koch, who had been scheduled to deliver an opening statement at the hearing, was forced to go on the defensive. Matilda Cuomo, who was also on hand (presumably representing the Governor), spoke in general terms about the wholesome Times Square that she remembered from childhood (given her age, that would be the Times Square of the nineteen-forties, a little late for wholesomeness), and the Mayor in his usual high-pitched fashion ranted that anybody who attempted to delay the project with lawsuits was a kook.

If, in spite of the corporation's optimistic claims, the project is obliged to undergo another year or so of litigation and finally fails, concerned citizens of New York may be given an opportunity to seek a better solution to the problems of West Forty-second Street than four million square feet of skyscrapers usurping its sun and air. This better solution is not likely to be found in any manifestation of architecture, high or low, aesthetically worthy or unworthy. True that architecture has been the handmaiden of many cultural transformations throughout the course of history, but when has it ever proved capable of eradicating prostitution, petty thievery, and traffic in forbidden substances? If a solution is possible at all, surely it should be looked for in relation to sociological and economic goals, which private entrepreneurs building for profit cannot be expected to take much interest in. (Another change the Development Corporation is looking at concerns the long-promised restoration to legitimate use of several of the "grind-house" movie theatres on Forty-second Street—hitherto intended to accommodate commercial theatrical enterprises, they would now be handed over to not-for-profit organizations as yet unnamed and without known funding.)

UNTIL last year, I would have said of the Forty-second Street project that it promised, if realized, to be the gravest urban disaster New York City had suffered in thirty years. That superlative I have since transferred to the project announced for the western rim of Columbus Circle, on the site of the old Coliseum. The term "old" is relative; the hideous and inefficient convention and commercial-display center that bears the name was built in the middle nineteen-fifties, and I watched it go up with dismay, fearing that it would outlast me. The reason I fail to take pleasure in its now appearing unlikely to do so is that something much worse than the Coliseum threatens to take its place: a structure that will do irremediable damage not only to Columbus Circle but to Central Park as well—indeed, to the entire city, whose most precious landmark the Park is so often claimed to be.

d. ehrenberg

The Coliseum was built under the auspices of the terrible-tempered Robert Moses. It was one of the series of infamous Title I housing projects that Moses undertook as a means of providing enormous financial rewards to the so-called "sponsors" of the projects—political hacks and unsavory bankers with whom he chose to make deals and who knew nothing about housing except to force the poor in their hundreds of thousands out of old slums into newly created ones, making tens of millions of dollars in the process. (The ugly story of how the Title I scandals helped to cause Moses' downfall is told in detail in Robert Caro's masterly biography "The Power Broker.") Moses sneaked the Coliseum into existence by dint of erecting a certain amount of housing behind it; with reason, the present occupants of that housing are among the most vehement opponents of the new project. Moses always preferred engineers to architects, on the ground that they were practical men and got things done. He liked buildings to be sturdy and without frills; for the design of the Coliseum he turned to architects who were masters of the harmlessly humdrum. No one would be tempted to dismiss in those terms the Israeli architect Moshe Safdie, whose grotesquely convoluted twin-towered carved-iceberg of a skyscraper is intended to rise to a height of nine hundred and twenty-five feet over Columbus Circle, at the southwest corner of the Park, and to dominate its neighborhood with something like the air of arrogant self-importance displayed by the Victor Emmanuel II monument in Rome (which was once a laughing-stock and is now to some postmodernists an icon). The English book designer and essayist Francis Meynell once quoted a pastry cook as saying, "There are three arts—painting, music, and ornamental pastry-making, of which last architecture is a subdivision." In the Columbus Circle project Safdie has sought to prove the pastry cook correct.

How did this monster from the hand

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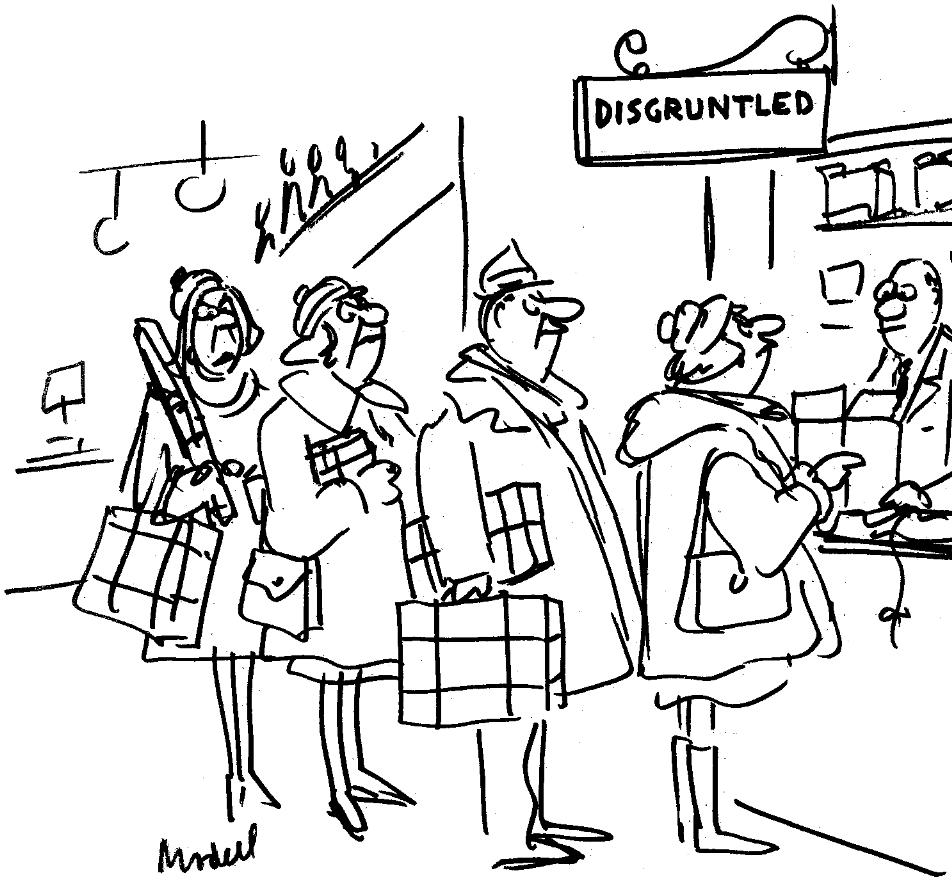

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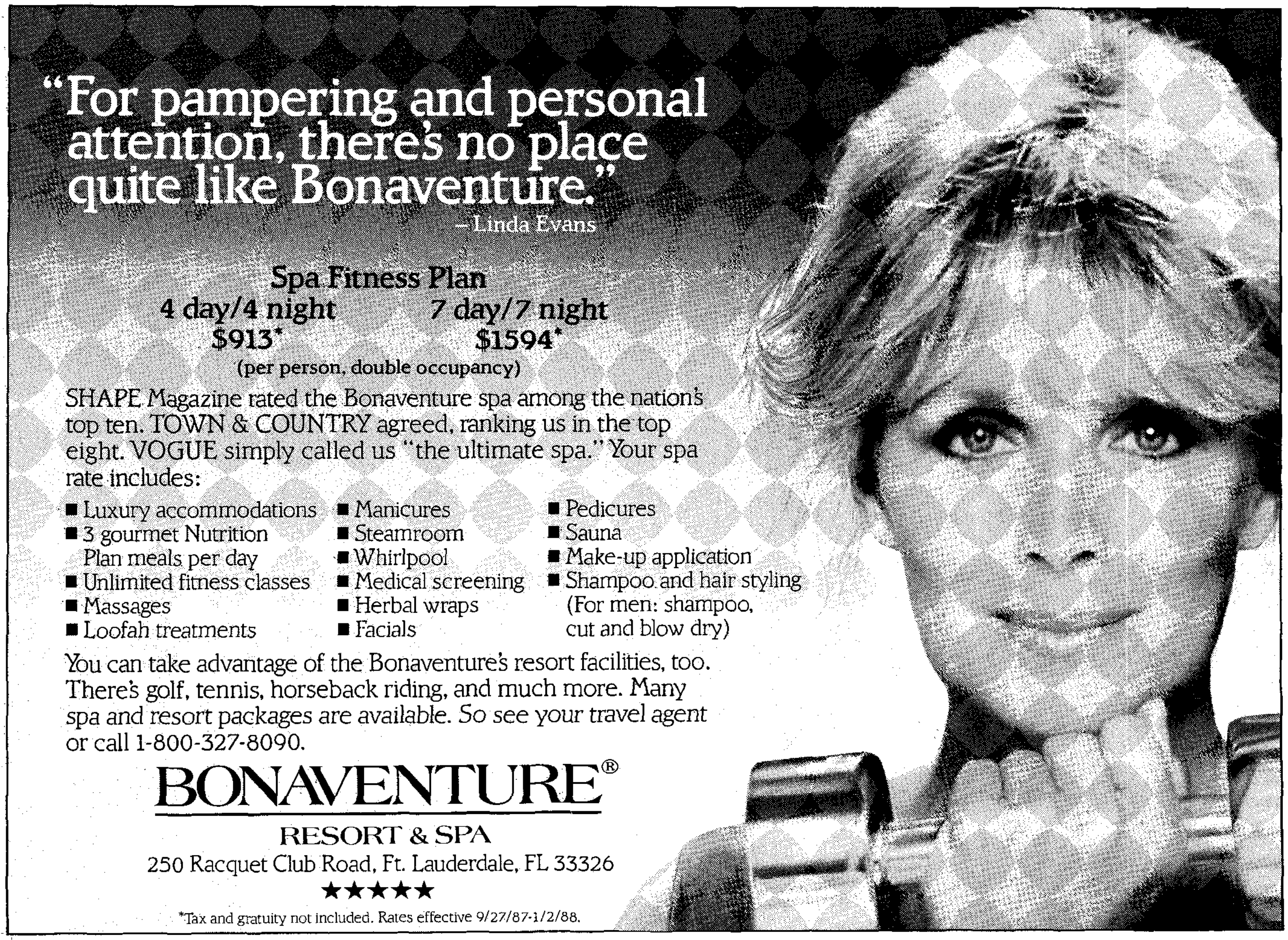
of the usually gentle and reasonable Safdie come into being, even on paper? And how can the citizens of New York prevent its translation into stone, glass, steel, and—to judge by some of the renderings I have seen—whipped cream? The first question is easier to answer than the second. With the opening last year of the new Javits Convention Center, on Eleventh Avenue in the Thirties, the Coliseum became a candidate for sale and demolition. Not that it had to become that; the site is extremely large and has long been coveted by developers as among the city's most desirable sites to build upon. Its value was obviously very high. Just how high, the Koch administration was eager to discover; indeed, so preoccupied was the administration with the stunning amount of money to be made from the sale of the Coliseum that it appears never to have seriously considered whether retaining the Coliseum and putting it to some new use might not serve the needs of the community as a whole better than the quick fix of an eye-popping amount of cash. The administration could have chosen to retain the Coliseum for some cultural, educational, or sports purpose of its own, or it could have sold the site at a modest price to some appropriate not-for-profit organization.

Instead, the city appears to have chosen to follow a course as injurious to its inhabitants and as wily and manipulative as that which Moses and his cohorts followed thirty-odd years ago. To prevent the successful pursuit of this course, a lawsuit has been brought against the city; the first move in what may well be a very lengthy series of legal skirmishes (the citizen lawsuit against the Forty-second Street Development Project dates back to 1985) took place in early June, when three not-for-profit organizations (the Municipal Art Society of New York, the Parks Council, and the New York Metropolitan Chapter of the American Planning Association) and four individuals (Ethel Sheffer, Edward Kirkland, Stephen F. Wilder, and Beverly Siegel) petitioned Justice Edward H. Lehner, of the Supreme Court of the State of New York, for a judgment annulling certain resolutions of the Board of Estimate of New York City and of the owner of the site, the Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority. The petition named as respondents the City of New York, the Board of Estimate, Edward I. Koch (both as Mayor and as an individual), the City Planning Commission, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, and the Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority.

The preliminary statement that accompanied the petition filed by the attorneys for the petitioners is remarkably free of legal jargon; any concerned citizen can comprehend it with ease and with a consequent sinking of the heart. It reads, in part:

> 1. This special proceeding is brought to annul the actions of the respondents . . . authorizing the sale of public property at Columbus Circle, where the New York Coliseum is now located, for the construction of a huge office/residential tower. The proposed building would be one of the three largest buildings in Manhattan. It would cast a shadow up Central Park West past 73rd Street, and across the Park up to and beyond Fifth Avenue; it would strain the ability of the public transit and streets to handle the added traffic; and it would significantly worsen, and in some cases cause, violations of Federal air quality standards.
>
> 2. The process by which the development was approved was fundamentally and fatally flawed. Contrary to zoning law, prospective developers were required to make cash bids for bonus square footage.



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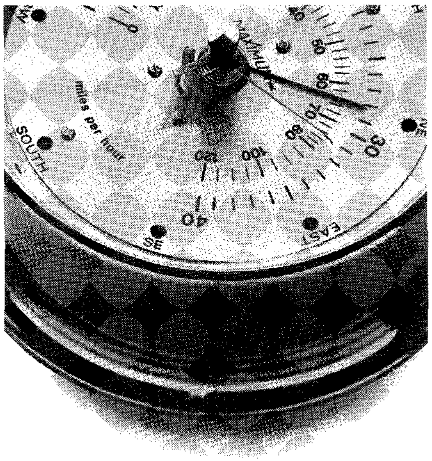
> Environmental review processes were manipulated so as to avoid the legally mandated thorough and critical consideration of the project's impacts. The draft environmental impact statement was glaringly incomplete, containing no information or analysis of the project's impact on traffic and air quality within Columbus Circle; and the discussion of these impacts in the final impact statement, after the public comment period had expired, was premised upon dubious data and a concocted methodology never before used in environmental impact analyses in New York. The purpose and/or effect of using this data and methodology was to conceal the severe adverse impact of the project.
>
> 3. The judgment of the City and the MTA/TBTA in this matter was infected by their desire to sell this public property for the highest possible dollar value. The purchase price, over $455 million, was more than twice the amount originally expected, and was the highest ever paid for a piece of Manhattan real estate. The proceeds of the anticipated sale appeared in the budgets of the City and the MTA months before any of the statutorily-required environmental analyses or public hearings had taken place. The City and the MTA/TBTA never analysed or considered whether the extra increment in this year's revenues derived from the sale of rights to construct the largest possible building outweighed the disadvantages to the public, for as long as that building might stand, of having on this site a structure five times the size of the adjoining Gulf & Western building.

The petition goes on to specify a number of areas in which the respondents are alleged to have broken the law; for example, when the site was put up for sale to the highest bidder the bid requirements amounted, according to the petitioners, to the sale of a zoning bonus:

> Contrary to the express provisions of the Zoning Resolution, the respondents required potential purchasers to apply for, and incorporate into their bidding price, the maximum bonus under law—an amount of square footage almost 80% as large as the entire Gulf & Western building adjoining the site. Under the Zoning Resolution, such a bonus can only be granted in exchange for specific public amenities and only if, after hearings, the "bonusable amenity" is found to warrant the extra square footage. The sole lawful consideration in deciding whether to award some or all of the bonus is the value of the proposed amenity, which in this case consisted of improvements to the 59th Street–Columbus Circle subway station. By the terms of their Request for Proposals ("RFP") and the ensuing contract with the purchaser, however, the City and the MTA/TBTA sold the bonus for a cash premium of $57 million over and above the $35 to $40 million cost of the subway improvements at Columbus Circle.

In short, the city arranged to secure for itself a premium of fifty-seven million dollars to which it was not entitled; and this sum, large as it sounds,



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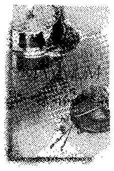

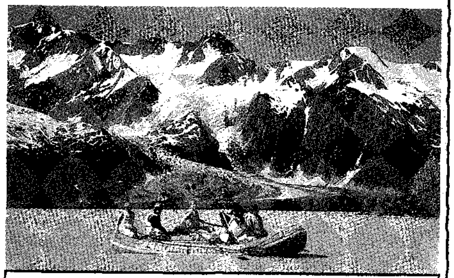

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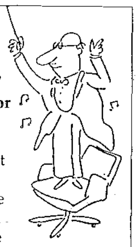

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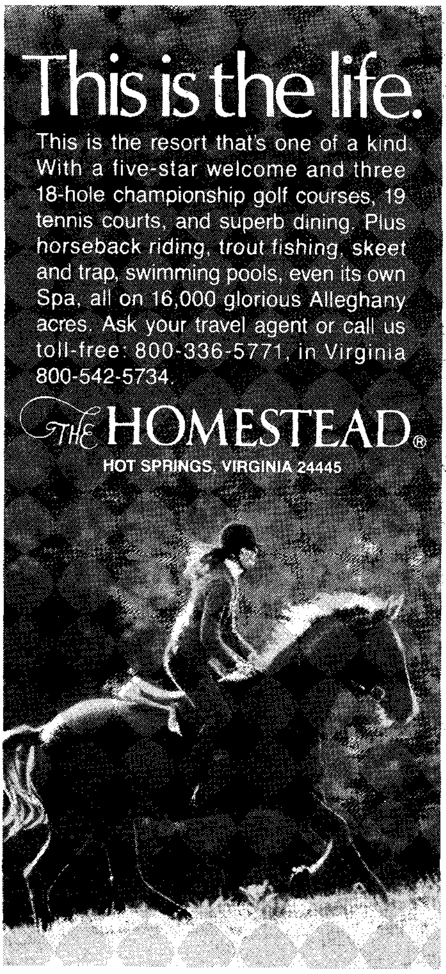

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would cost the successful bidders little or nothing, because the revenues that they would derive from the extra amount of space—four hundred and forty-eight thousand square feet—available to them for rental purposes would return it over an easily calculable number of years. The petitioners further claimed that the city and the M.T.A./T.B.T.A. made an irreversible commitment to a building of maximum density, thereby violating the requirement that the environmental impact of such a building be considered "at the inception of the planning process instead of being assessed in *pro forma* fashion after the crucial decisions have been made." Moreover, the respondents were said to have decided, contrary to law, that the unavoidable review of the environmental impact of the building would be carried out not by a city agency with knowledge of local conditions but by the T.B.T.A., a state agency charged with the management of bridges and tunnels, and itself a party to the sale.

When the draft environmental-impact statement was prepared and certified by the M.T.A./T.B.T.A., it proved, according to the petitioners, radically incomplete. It contained no data and no analyses whatsoever with respect to traffic or air quality at Columbus Circle, thereby precluding public comment on these critical points. In the final environmental-impact statement, the data and analyses that were at last included turned out to be, in the view of the petitioners, false and misleading, since these sections of the statement held that the impact of the gigantic new project on an intersection already threatened daily with gridlock would be minimal.

The city's first response to the suit was to brush it aside—claiming its arguments were either without merit or not susceptible to judicial review. Those questions are for Justice Lehner to decide, and it is expected that his decision will not be long in coming. Meanwhile, it is the hope of the petitioners, as it is the hope of so-called "do-gooders" everywhere, that time will prove to be on their side, and not on the side of the purchaser of the property—a newly created affiliate of Boston Properties, which is headed by the rich, ambitious, and contentious Mortimer Zuckerman. Sharing a financial interest in the affiliate and intending, according to the first announcement, to become the major tenant of the structure is the powerful Wall Street financial house of Salomon

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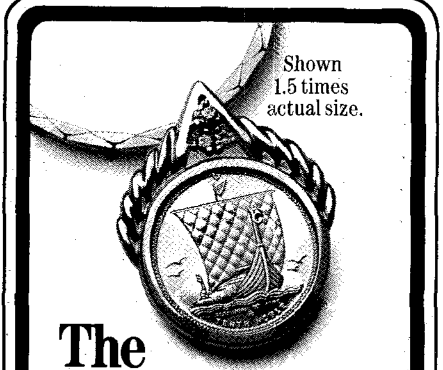

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Brothers, which originally planned to accommodate some seven thousand employees at Columbus Circle and has since reduced that number by a thousand or so; other tenants will find room in the structure for as many as two thousand employees. Repellently big and ungainly as the Gulf & Western Building is, it shelters a comparatively scanty number of people—something on the order of a couple of thousand.

Organizations like the Municipal Art Society, the Parks Council, and the American Planning Association do not enter lightly into lawsuits. Their boards of directors move with a certain Roman gravitas in voting to pursue by litigation an end that they would much rather pursue by means of private, informal discussions. In the present instance, however, the seller and the purchaser have been so adamant in their determination to—as the current slang has it—"do" a deal that the time-consuming legal rituals of thrust and parry were quickly seen to be unavoidable. The suit can have a number of different outcomes. If the plaintiffs should win, the deal would be either nullified or renegotiated, with the almost certain result in either case that the building would be greatly reduced in height and bulk. If the respondents should win, the building might still be improved by being redesigned on a smaller scale, with less iceberg showing against the sky; this redesign might be prompted by the adverse public opinion that the suit has aroused and will continue to arouse. Zuckerman announced last month that he has ordered drawings of a scaled-down project and that Safdie's firm is preparing them; whether this proposal springs from the rumored withdrawal of Salomon Brothers as a major tenant or from an unwillingness to confront as adversaries such prominent New Yorkers as Jacqueline Onassis and Bill Moyers (leaders of a committee to oppose the building) is not yet clear. If enough time should pass in the course of the litigation, still another outcome would be possible, though improbable (and unwelcome in every respect save this one): that, following the recent stock-market crash, economic conditions would alter so radically for the worse that construction in New York City would come to a halt, and this project, among a hundred others, would have to be indefinitely postponed.

Up to the present, the public has remained largely ignorant of the true nature of the Columbus Circle project; if it recalls reading anything about it in the press, it is that the method of selecting a developer for the site had seemed to be exceptionally open and aboveboard: the T.B.T.A. had sent out a Request for Proposals, to which some fifteen developers had responded, submitting building designs by some of the most distinguished architects in America, among them Helmut Jahn, James Stewart Polshek, Kevin Roche, Moshe Safdie, and Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. The public may have subsequently gained the impression that the method of selection was not *quite* as open and aboveboard as the city had wished to have it believe—plainly, a deal was being done—and that in terms of architectural merit the design submitted by the winning developer had proved a disappointment to architecture critics and concerned citizens. Having gained that impression, the public may now be content to dismiss the subject, not least because deals are a commonplace here and because architecture critics and concerned citizens nearly always pronounce themselves disappointed on such occasions. That being the case, the public is un-

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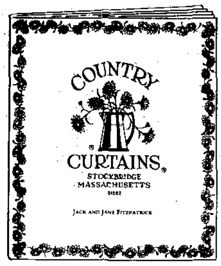

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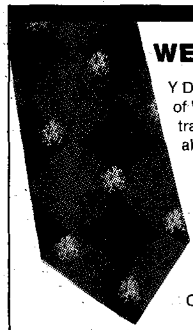

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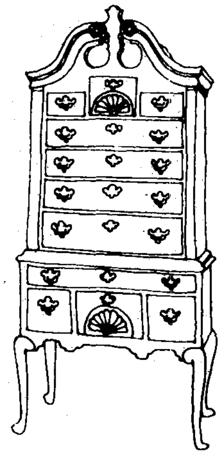
likely to pay any further attention to the project unless the lawsuit leads to a number of banner headlines—headlines yet bigger than those that daily seek to shock us with their revelations of crookedness in high places.

EVEN if the current citizen lawsuits should prove successful, we cannot expect them to have much lasting effect on the city's future. The wheeling-and-dealing conditions that have prompted the lawsuits continue to flourish, and new methods of preserving those conditions for the benefit of real-estate developers are certain to be devised: battalions of lawyers stand ready to devote their professional lifetimes to that not very lofty goal. In any event, we should bear in mind that the machinations of real-estate developers and of the banks and insurance companies that supply them with financial backing are symptoms of a general malaise afflicting the city; many other symptoms, of a still greater fearsomeness, deserve our attention. It is a fact, for example, that while the Koch administration is engaged in giving the city away the city itself is, as a physical entity, rotting away. Underground, our subways and water mains are rusting and crumbling. Aboveground, our bridges and highways are in a similar state of disrepair; portions of the Queensborough Bridge and the F.D.R. Drive daily threaten to fall into the East River. More ominous than any number of such symptoms of physical breakdown, however, are the symptoms of psychological breakdown manifested by this administration in respect to education, law and order, and the proper care of the poor, the ill, the elderly, the homeless. In respect to the services that a great city is expected to provide, New York is losing control—has perhaps already lost control—of the machinery essential to carrying them out. In the view of some critics, the city is a gilded circus wagon, running at all only because it is running downhill.

To paraphrase a line from a celebrated poem by Marianne Moore, we are all dying of the disease, ourselves. This diagnosis, at once lyrical and clinical, appears as applicable to cities and states as to individuals. We latter-day doomsayers argue that just as the Roman Empire began to die not at its farthest boundaries but at its heart, so New York City threatens to die not in the outer boroughs but in the hurly-burly of Manhattan, which every day

GETAWAY TO YESTERDAY



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grows more gorgeous and more uninhabitable. Walking its streets, I struggle to keep count of the number of the new apartment-house and office towers that are leaping skyward here; in vain, for not in over a decade has so much construction been under way in New York City. Once, our towers rose only on the most advantageous street corners; today they rise in mid-block. Once, they stood within their own lot lines; today they hover greedily, by means of ingenious cantilevers, over adjacent houses, churches, theatres, highways, and gardens.

A visitor might regard these gleaming new structures as signs of robust civic health, but to me they are signs of the malaise that Marianne Moore was writing about—a malaise of selfish inattention that has permitted what is called in sociological jargon "the quality of life" to deteriorate for the many in the name of improving it for a few. It is a malaise that has led to a mystery, of which I may say that the more I study it the less I understand it. Again and again as I pass these high apartment towers I look up and ask myself who the occupants of them can be. As far as I am able to judge, I ask the question not out of envy but out of simple ignorance. For, with one or two exceptions, nobody that I have ever met, and nobody that any of my friends has ever met, possesses one of those sunstruck glassy aeries which in recent years by the hundreds and thousands have flung themselves thirty or forty stories into the sky. Presumably, most of these aeries are either coöperatives or condominiums and have been purchased at a cost of hundreds of thousands of dollars, or perhaps at a cost of millions. Many of them are occupied only a few weeks of the year; others are never occupied. At night, a dozen or more floors of these buildings are in total darkness. Where are their owners? In Tokyo? Berlin? Beirut? Shanghai? I assume that this must be the explanation, having been told that the owners are in many cases foreigners, in whose opinion New York real estate is a safer investment than any investment they might have considered making nearer home.

If I am at a loss to know who the owners of these apartments may be, I am also at a loss to know how any individual can afford to pay for them; quite unexceptional apartments in New York City sell today for several million dollars, and a grand apartment on Fifth Avenue will be offered at a price of between ten and fifteen mil-

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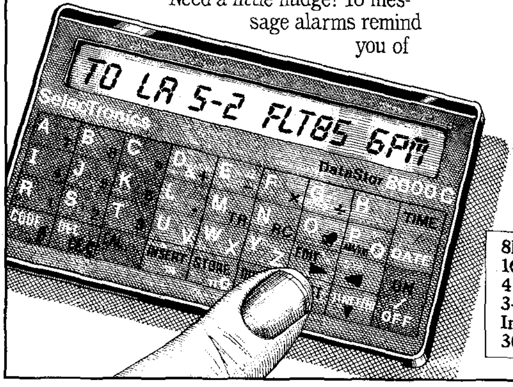

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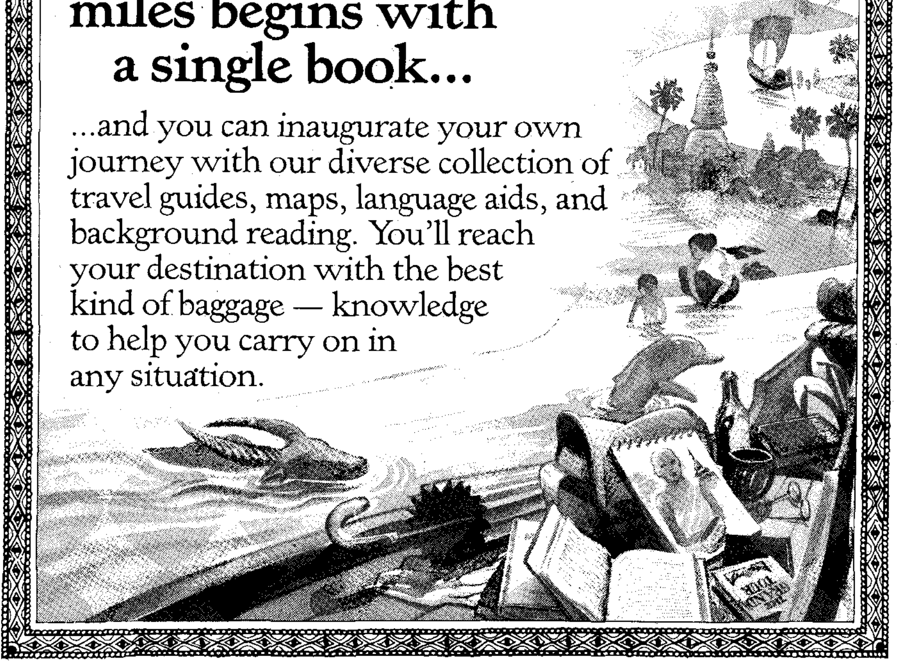

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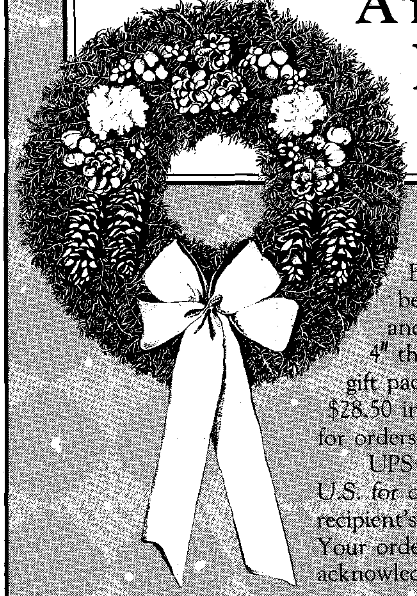

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lion. It would be a matter of little concern to most of us how much the very rich may choose to pay for shelter if it were not that their prices become, on a diminished scale, our prices, in respect both to purchase and to rental. In a building that a few years ago would have been considered a near-slum, a single room—euphemistically called a studio—rents today for well over a thousand dollars a month, while a studio condominium in some nondescript quarter of Manhattan sells for over a hundred thousand dollars. With an ever-mounting velocity, we are forced to go where our Mayor cheerfully invites us to go. "If you can't afford Manhattan," he says, speaking from Gracie Mansion, "try the outer boroughs."

When the heart of a city is increasingly owned by absentee millionaires, and when the young folk at work there are resolved that as quickly as possible they, too, will become absentee millionaires, the survival of the city as a whole is put in jeopardy. For what we have assumed was the heart of the city is then no longer truly a heart—is no longer the natural means by which an immense organism is kept alive and vigorous. By my reckoning, this is the point that we non-absentee non-millionaires have reached, or are about to reach, in the Borough of Manhattan. Reluctantly, we must confront the fact that the city we have cherished is being taken from us even as we are encouraged to believe that it is being marvellously transformed for our sakes. How can we be so ungrateful, the Koch administration asks, as to object to the benefactions being showered upon us by this unprecedented building boom? Alas, our objections are by no means as vehement as they ought to be. At the very moment when we should be uttering a loud cry of protest, we find—familiar oddity of nightmares—that though we make an effort to scream, no sound emerges. Silently, in astonished dismay, we perceive that the greatest city on earth stands poised on the brink of self-destruction. And then we perceive something still more astonishing: that the city itself appears not to notice where it is standing.

—Brendan Gill

•

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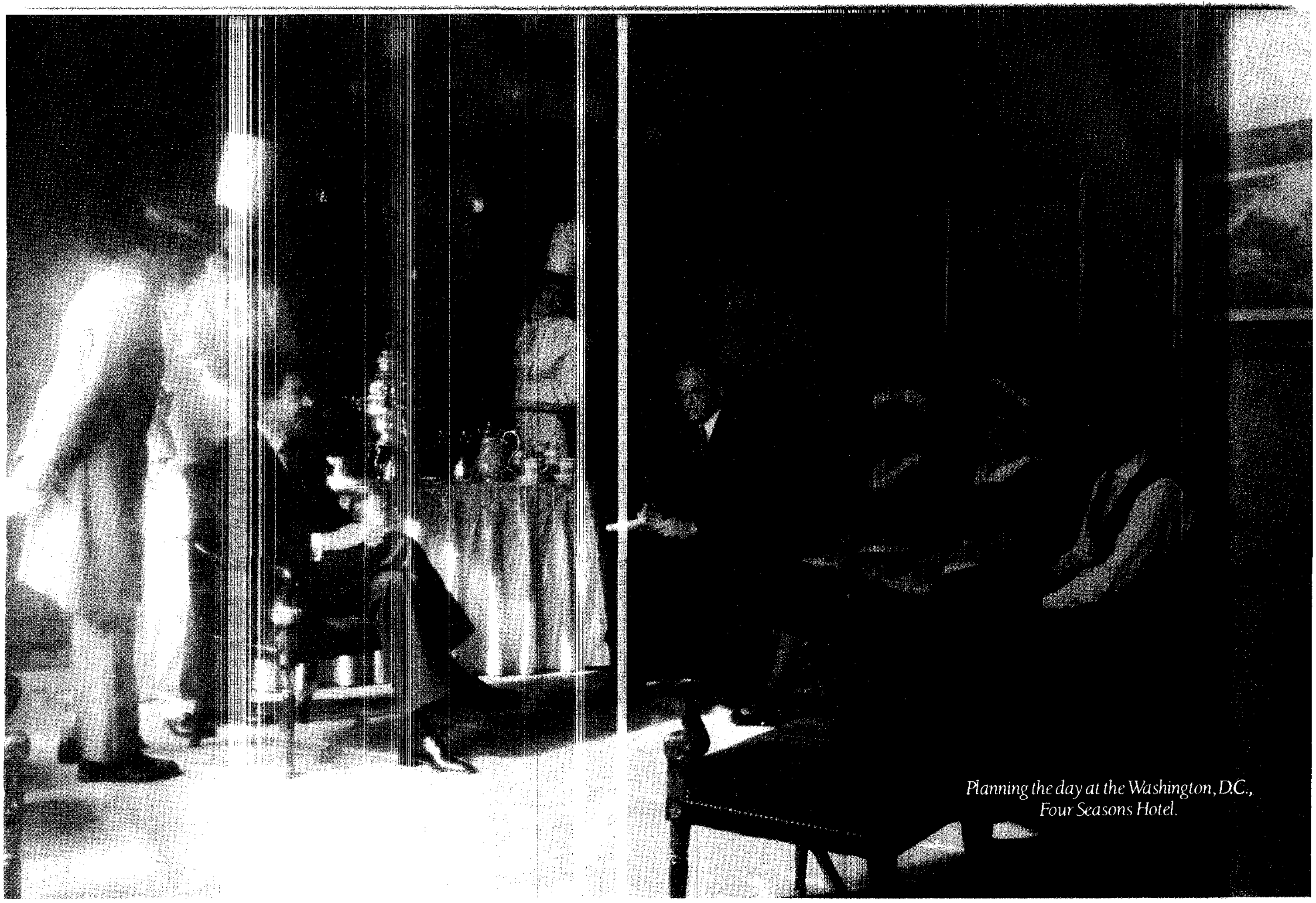

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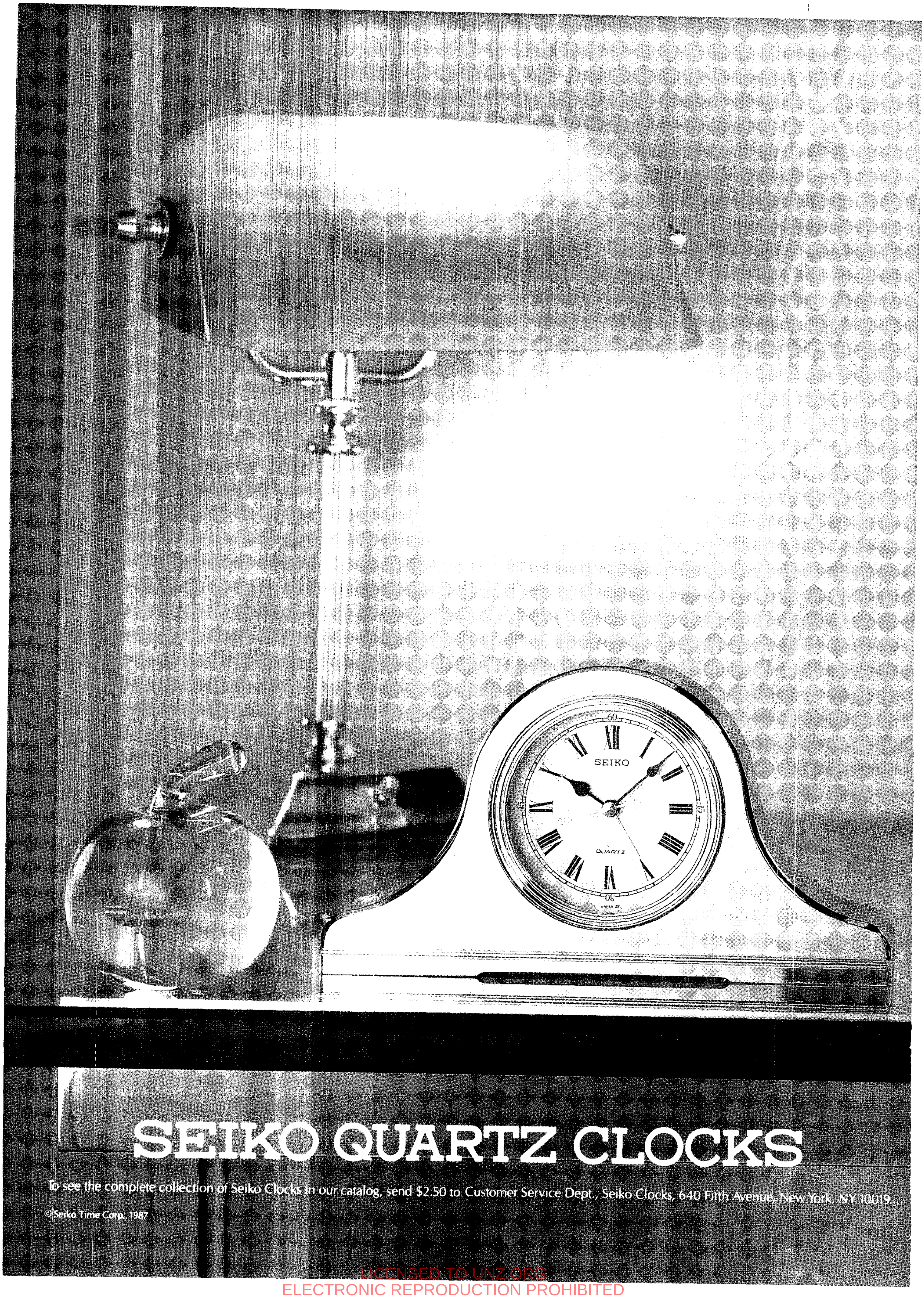

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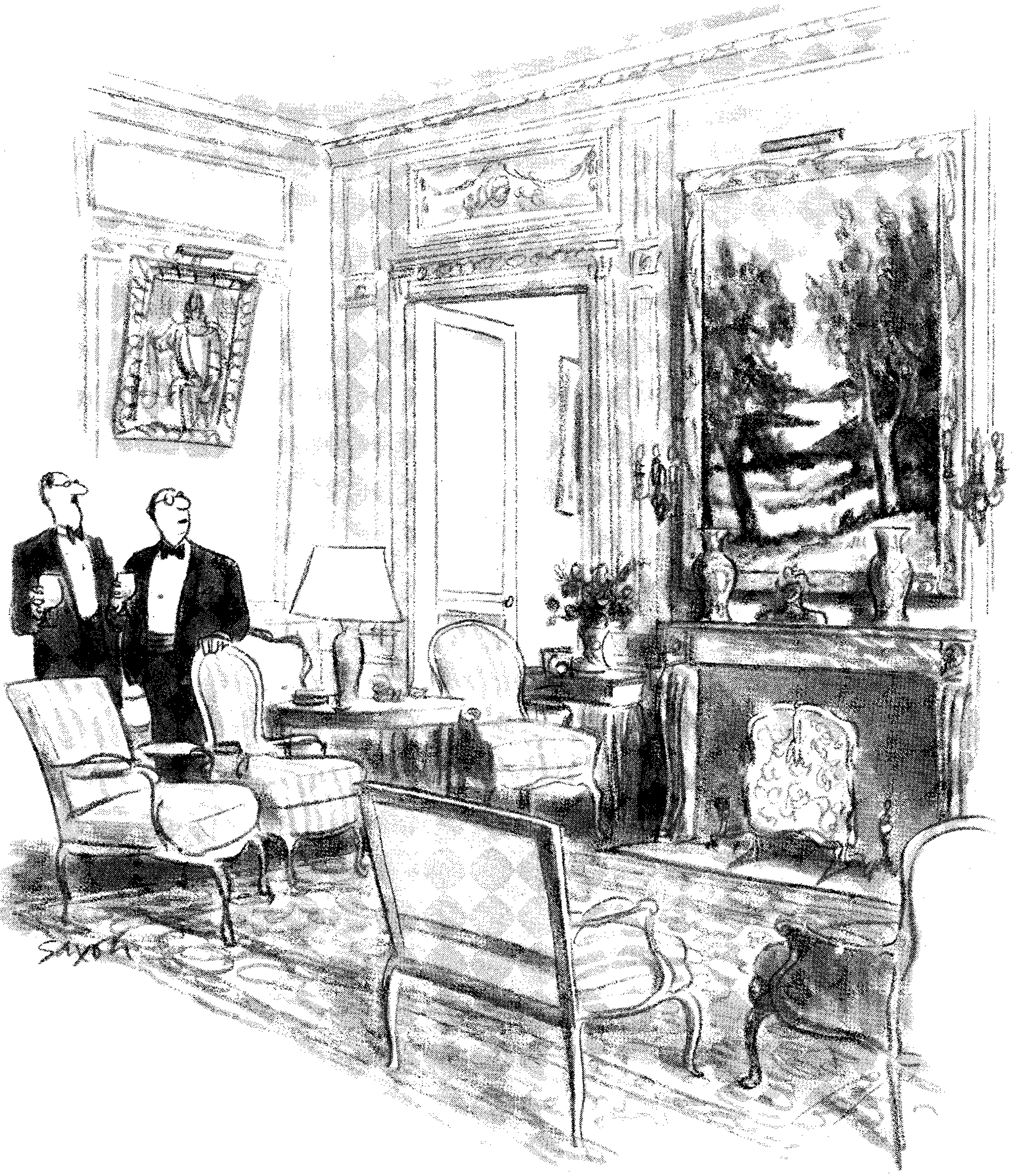
THE THEATRE

He Was Her Man

Terrence McNally is one of our most original and audacious dramatists, and one of our funniest, and his "Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune," which opened last week at the Manhattan Theatre Club, is among the best plays he has written. A comedy, of course, with a strong undertone of feeling and seriousness, it is set in a small apartment on Tenth Avenue in the Fifties. The apartment is Frankie's. She is a waitress at a cheap restaurant where Johnny is the cook; he is in his mid-forties, she in her late thirties, and they are both single. The play opens mid-sex, to the sound of orgasm, in the dark; then a dim light reveals them in bed. They are elated in what he calls the "afterglow." The audience soon finds out that this is their first time together—that they are barely acquaintances—and in the course of the action we learn about them as they learn about each other. Frankie is a realistic woman, gruff and caustic of tongue, who has suffered a number of disappointments in life and has rather low expectations. Johnny, veteran of a broken marriage, is a volatile type and more overtly emotional. Once the sex is over, she wants him to go, and leave her to spend the rest of the evening as usual, watching television and eating ice cream, but he insists upon staying, knowing, long before she does, that they have an affinity that goes beyond and much deeper than present circumstances. Both are sensitive and literate (she never finished high school; he had a couple of years of college), and both are humorous.

"Frankie and Johnny" is composed of small details and off-the-cuff conversations that turn suddenly intimate; he insists that he has fallen in love with her, a claim she brushes off as nonsense. It isn't nonsense, and we watch the play slowly become a love story, without ever losing its comedic footing. Many of the lines are very funny, and each of them springs directly from the one who speaks it; there are no jokes here. The contributions of the splendid actors—Kathy Bates and Kenneth Welsh—to the complexity and richness of these characters cannot be overestimated, but it was Mr. McNally, of course, who made the characters up. Unseen but also present is a fatuous radio disk jockey, who plays Debussy's "Clair de Lune" after Johnny has telephoned a request for something romantic and beautiful. The appropriately drab setting was designed by James Noone and lighted by David Noling; the appropriate costumes, such as they are—a robe and a slip here, a pair of shorts there—were designed by David Wool-



"When I kick off, that one goes to the Met, if they're nice."

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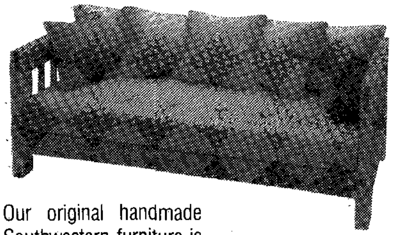

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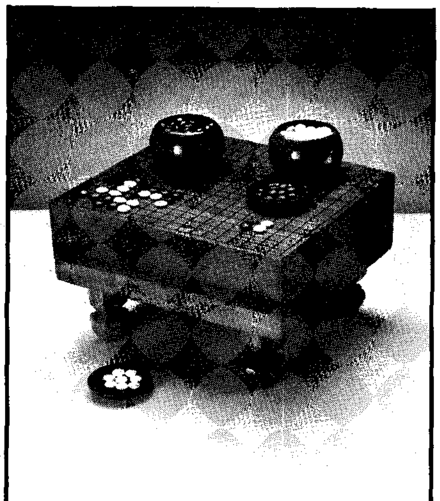
ard. Paul Benedict was the able director.

"SARAFINA!," a South African import at the Mitzi Newhouse, is an explosion of talent—of music and dancing and singing—which was conceived, written, and directed by Mbongeni Ngema, who also, in collaboration with Hugh Masekela, composed and arranged the score. Mr. Ngema is a co-author of "Woza Albert!" and the author of "Asinamali!," both of which have played successfully in New York, and one of which, "Woza Albert!," originated, as did "Sarafina!," in the remarkable Market Theatre in Johannesburg. "Sarafina!" is about a brave group of high-school students in Soweto who are determined to put on a show dramatizing events in their lives, and also—and most important—the imprisonment of Nelson Mandela. Such grim news, such blazing spirits—and so much fun! Near the beginning, a teacher, one Mistress It's a Pity, in the jaunty, sexy person of Baby Cele, leads her pupils in a syncopated rendition of the Lord's Prayer, and that sets the tone for the proceedings. The music, a form of popular music called Mbaqanga, which came out of the townships, sounds beautiful. The dancing, much of it acrobatic, is thrilling.

During the intermission, the word "energy" was batted around the lobby quite a lot, as so often happens at shows about black life. The word is suitable enough in this instance if it doesn't cause one to overlook the invention and discipline and craftsmanship of Mr. Ngema and the wonderful kids in his company, most of whom appear to be in their mid-teens. All of them are fine. Leleti Khumalo is Sarafina—star pupil and ringleader, and the prettiest and, if that is conceivable, the most defiant and passionate of those impassioned children. The setting and the vivid costumes were by Sarah Roberts, and the lighting was by Mannie Manim. The show runs over two and a half hours—not a moment too long for me.

"DON'T GET GOD STARTED," at the Longacre, is a gospel musical, with gospel songs, by Marvin Winans, interspersed with brief playlets—or parables—by Ron Milner, who also directed. I think I must say right off that I am not the ideal reporter for this enterprise: the amplification is so loud, so thunderous, that my own reaction was about three parts cringe to



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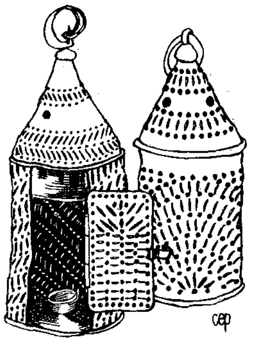
one part admiration. Yet who could fail to admire Mr. Winans' melodic, dynamic score as rendered (mike to lips) by such strong singers as Vanessa Bell Armstrong and Be Be Winans, among others? The sketches by Mr. Milner (at room temperature) invariably make their point with brevity and feeling. —EDITH OLIVER

Flying High

ANYONE who loved "The Foreigner" should probably dash off to see "Birds of Paradise," which opened last week at the Promenade Theatre to some very cross reviews. A warm, sweet, funny musical about an amateur theatre group rehearsing a version of Chekhov's "The Seagull," "Birds of Paradise" was developed in the Musical Theatre Program of New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. It has a book and songs by Winnie Holzman and David Evans (she's words, he's music), and an eight-member cast of superlative charm directed by Arthur Laurents, and it is the wittiest little musical I have seen in ages.

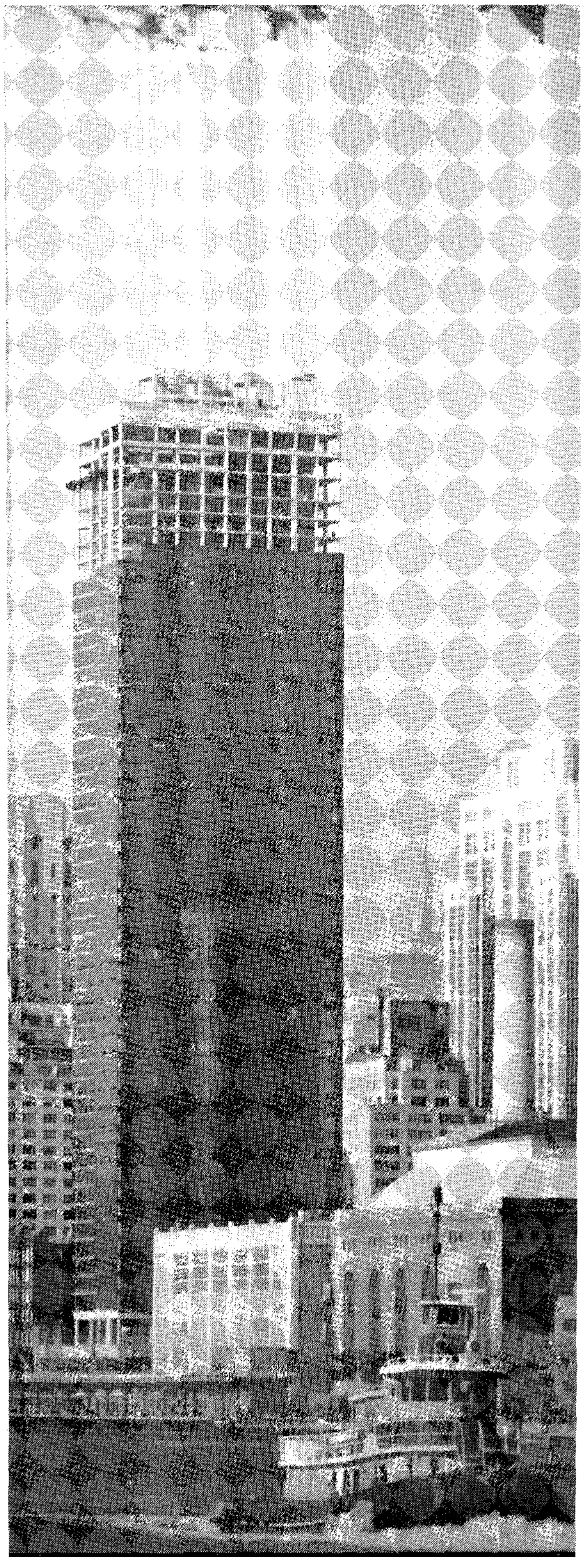
"Birds of Paradise" is a lot like "The Foreigner"—which also opened to some very cross reviews, and which ended up running a year and a half. It has the same zany, unpretentious innocence and spirit of fun that made Larry Shue's play such a joy, the same surface dumbness modestly glossing over what is actually a very clever idea. It's full of things that you find yourself laughing about days later: the discussion of the bird-of-paradise image at the end of Act I, or the penguin number at the beginning of Act II.



The cleverness begins with the notion of using "The Seagull" as the basis for a contemporary plot—not just any old Chekhov play but the one that people remember best, whether they realize it or not. Nearly everyone remembers the opening exchange, for instance ("Why do you always wear black?" "Because I'm in mourning for my life"), or the last line ("Get Arkadina away somehow. You see, Konstantin has shot himself"). Most of all, one remembers the scene where Konstantin drops a dead bird at Nina's feet—and the way the ungainly image keeps coming up, again and again.

"Birds of Paradise" is about fools and madmen: Homer (Todd Graff), the temperamental composer-lyricist who has written a futuristic musical adaptation of "The Seagull;" Lawrence Wood (John Cunningham), the Broadway has-been who thinks his visit to Harbor Island ("a small fictional island somewhere on the eastern seaboard") may change his life, and who becomes infatuated with Homer's musical when he hears Julia (Crista Moore) singing it; Julia herself, who becomes infatuated with Wood, to the distress of Homer and his mother . . . As the action in "Birds of Paradise" begins to echo the events in "The Seagull," you find your perception of Chekhov changing, like the ever-changing backdrop of Philipp Jung's ingenious set. A stylized evocation of the view from the disused church where the play is being rehearsed, it seems to be made up of a series of scrims, thickly painted to look now like Monet's "Water Lilies" and now like the sedgy moss at the bottom of the ocean, depending on what light is being cast on them; and, depending on the light, the view, like the play, goes back and forth between a two- and a three-dimensional world. It can take on a realistic feeling of depth and perspective or the dull, flat sheen of a beautiful piece of Chinese silk.

"Birds of Paradise" would be worth seeing only for that magical set, but everything about it is good. Miss Holzman and Mr. Evans have provided just the right number of funny, wistful, and stirring songs in the right combination. Michael Starobin's bright orchestrations and Linda Haberman's staging can transform a bad musical-comedy number into a good one without our ever knowing how. Jules Fisher's lighting deftly steers us away from taking the action in the play too literally. And the show is perfectly cast: Mary Beth Peil as Marjorie, the Arkadina figure; Donna Murphy as Hope, the radical feminist who secretly loves Homer; Andrew Hill Newman as Dave, the ineffectual young man whose bad, derivative musical the company is rehearsing at the beginning of the evening; J. K. Simmons as Andy, the inarticulate auto mechanic who longs for more out of life; and Barbara Walsh as Stella, his vacant-eyed wife. Mr. Graff and Miss Moore, as the two young people, are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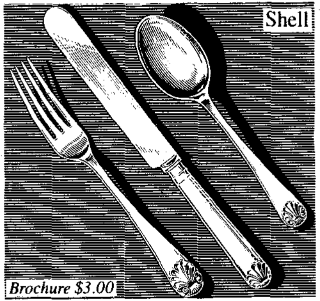

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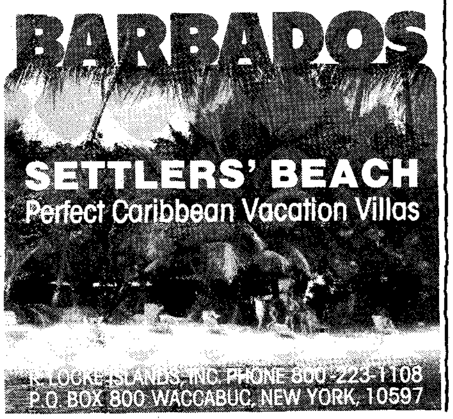

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particularly endearing, but it's Mr. Simmons who brings down the house with his solution to the metaphor problem.

A good deal in "Birds of Paradise" might seem to put paid, once and for all, to the concept of dramatic metaphor: whole sequences leave you thinking you'll never be able to take bird imagery seriously again. But it's really themselves Miss Holzman and Mr. Evans are making fun of, and their backstage musical—like all backstage musicals—has its own overriding metaphor.

"Birds of Paradise" may be too clever by half. But the last time I saw something that was too clever by half—well, it was so long ago I can't even remember. —MIMI KRAMER

•

JOURNEY

Some time after the roofs fall in
the cars begin to come

on weekends the cars go to the country
this is the country

an old road has been found
crossing under a new one

the right clothes are put on
for visiting nobody who lives there

a broad footprint has been deciphered
crossing a cellar

in one of the empty houses
by the buried road

someone has driven a whole day
to declare how long it has been there

nobody knows anything
about who was here before

but nothing is real
until it can be sold

so a nice young couple
has cast in plaster

the broad foot
that went somewhere

the authentic white sole
rising from the white ground

so that people with cars
can take the foot home

to climb on their
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LETTER FROM ROME

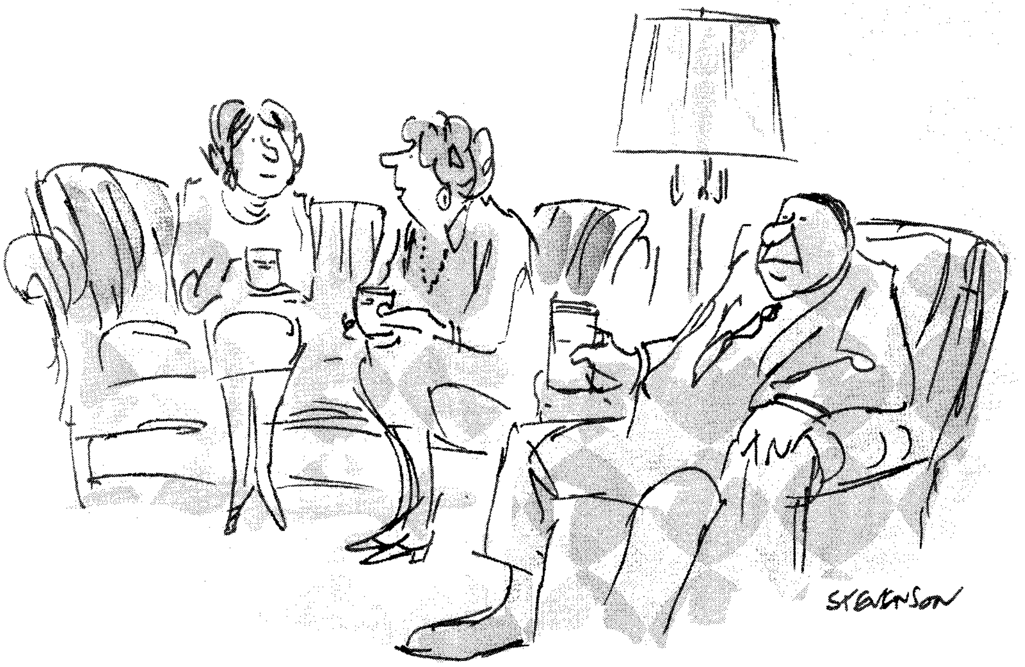
THE excitement stirred up by last summer's election of Ilona Staller to the Italian parliament had, like many causes célèbres in this country, a familial flavor about it—the intimate feeling of a ruckus between people who all know each other too well. For years before the election of June, 1987, everyone in Italy had heard of Miss Staller: she is the country's most notorious pornography star. Under the name of Cicciolina, a versatile Italian endearment that translates literally as Little Cuddly One, she acts in pornographic movies and conducts a baroque travelling stage show in which gauzy wings, pythons, violins, and motorcycles are props in eclectic sex performances that have given Miss Staller an exhaustive acquaintance with Article 528 of the Italian Penal Code—the law against offending the common decency. In spite of this law, a characteristic—some call it characteristically Catholic—official laxness about what may appear on advertising billboards or in family magazines in Italy has made Cicciolina's frail, provocative body, cryptic smile, and ravelled white-blond hair familiar over the last decade to anyone who has taken a subway or leafed through *Oggi*. Throughout the early nineteen-eighties, her voice and the straightforward sex fantasies it evoked were well known to anyone who switched on "Radio Luna," her late-night radio show. Long before the election, she was, at thirty-seven, something of an Italian institution, and had an established image and a universal visibility that it is difficult to imagine a hard-core-pornography star achieving in the United States. The stir that surrounded her nomination as a parliamentary candidate by the Italian Radical Party—a stir that turned into an uproar when she was actually elected to the post of deputy (a position analogous to that of an American congressman) from Pomezia, a medium-sized industrial town outside Rome—was based, in typical Italian style, less on moral outrage than on a profound sense of inappropriateness.

Many of the people who phoned in to radio programs or were canvassed by journalists in street polls seemed to feel that Cicciolina—or the Honorable Staller, as her official title runs—had stepped outside the clearly designated boundaries of her own world. In doing so, she created one of those jarring collisions of unsuited elements that, like having a wife and a mistress at a dinner table together, bring pain to the average Italian heart. "Her election," wrote the journalist Dacia Maraini, "explodes a contradiction as old as the world: between that which inhabits the everyday imagination of men, and the condemnation of this imagination by the very same men at the moment when they feel themselves invested with a responsibility as highly esteemed and important as that of taking care of the political and economic destiny of the nation."

PUBLIC tolerance in Italy for almost any combination of sex and politics is extremely high: the only shock evinced in the press here over the Gary Hart scandal was amazement that Americans could get so excited over a married man's *scappatella*—little adventure. For an Italian politician, having a reputation as a womanizer often enhances prestige; certain permanent fixtures in the political scene, like Gianni De Michelis, formerly the Minister of Labor and now the president of socialist deputies, are ritually photographed with resplendent women of the unserious variety in glossy Roman piano bars. However, anything of this frolicsome nature is supposed to remain in its own sphere, even if that is quite prominent, and not go intruding itself officially into Palazzo Montecitorio, where the Chamber of Deputies sits.

"Those people who are acting shocked, who are pretending that they had no idea of what kind of show I did, as if they had just fallen from the clouds, are hypocrites," Ilona Staller told me one afternoon a few weeks after the election, when I went to visit her at her office outside Rome. "It's fake respectability. I did shows all through my campaign—an exhausting schedule—and appeared in discothèques in little villages, baring my breasts and handing out copies of my agenda: no to nuclear energy; liberalization of sex laws; repeal of Article 528; animal rights."

In conversation, Cicciolina's voice



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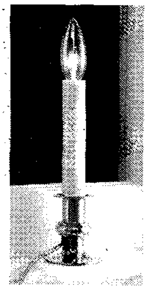

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shifts back and forth between the professional girlish flutter she uses, to great effect, in her performances and a low-pitched, perfectly intelligent Hungarian-accented Italian. She is a naturalized Italian citizen, born Hungarian into what she describes as a middle-class family in Budapest. The overlapping parts of various sensational accounts of her life that have been published in the Italian press (she does little to clarify matters) suggest that she arrived in Italy about seventeen years ago as the result of a marriage of convenience and, after working for a few years in the legitimate cinema, moved into the hard-core market; she now heads a small agency of pornography actors. She has a beautiful face, the figure of a woman younger than Cicciolina could logically be, and extraordinary clear and white Hungarian skin. It is important to understand how she looks, because, as with most performers, her appearance is a vital part of her function: it reveals the specialized persona she has created for her public. Not Italian herself, but having in some sure way tapped a vein of national fantasy, as a foreigner sometimes can, she has made herself into a peculiarly Italian sex icon. She isn't what most Americans would envision on hearing that term; the *personaggio* that Miss Staller and her manager, Riccardo Schicchi, concocted about eleven years ago is neither earthy nor sun-ripened. It is instead a perverse rendering of an image that might be taken from a religious calendar—say, a calendar distributed by the Christian Democratic Party: a lovely young blond girl in the bridal white of her First Communion, devoutly awaiting ravishment. Cicciolina makes appearances dressed like a hybrid of Gigi and Little Eva, and clutching stuffed animals, and she gives curiously daffy flower-child speeches praising nature and free love. Yet for all this, there is something intentionally equivocal and threatening about her straight dark eyebrows, plucked and dyed to be as stylized as a part of a Greek mask; some deliberate reference to Egyptians or Etruscans in the pearl fillet she wears around her hair and forehead; something eerily archaic about the almost clown-size fixed smile she paints on with bright-pink lipstick.

Shortly after the election, Federico Fellini gave an interview in *La Stampa* in which he said, "Cicciolina is a dream of Italian society. I say 'dream' not in the sense of a desired

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reality but in the sense of something profound that flowers involuntarily, and with which one has to come to terms. . . . Those giggles, that honeyed babbling speech, like that of an adult speaking to small children, that constant incomprehensible smile like a hieroglyphic, those white clothes of a bride or a First Communicant give Cicciolina the impenetrability of a closed symbol, of a gestating dream." Elsewhere in the interview, Fellini referred admiringly to the extraordinary theatrical quality of the scene that marked Cicciolina's official entry into the parliament. The rather dull election—as usual, the Christian Democrats held the dominant hand in a centrist coalition also containing elements of left and right—had been enlivened only by the unexpected rallying of the Greens, the Italian ecological party, who gained an unprecedented thirteen seats (mostly at the expense of the Communists), and by the emergence of the newly honorable Staller, who blew into the parliament in a freakish flurry of twenty thousand votes. Even Cicciolina's victory rally in Piazza Navona—during which the performer bared her breasts, and her frenzied supporters damaged two marble toes and a kneecap belonging to figures on the Neptune fountain—had not prepared the public for the spectacle of her arrival at Palazzo Montecitorio, dressed demurely in a high-necked green dress with Italian-tricolor flounces, and escorted by a cortege of topless porn stars from her agency—women whose abundant Mediterranean charms and haughty near-military bearing gave the scene the flavor of a farce by Aristophanes. The simultaneous arrival of dozens of police, journalists, and curiosity seekers, along with a phalanx of green bicycles ridden by leaders of the environmentalist party and a lone anti-nuclear-power demonstrator bearing a symbolic basket of radiation-free mushrooms, probably confirmed forever what many Italians already knew: that in this country opera buffa can sound a powerful note in politics.

NO one has publicly admitted to voting for Cicciolina. However, most Italians assume that the twenty thousand votes she received—the only Radical Party candidate who received more was the quirky anti-establishment politician Marco Pannella—were not those of rabid loyal fans but, instead, the mass of Italian voters who, as a protest, ritually cast blank or

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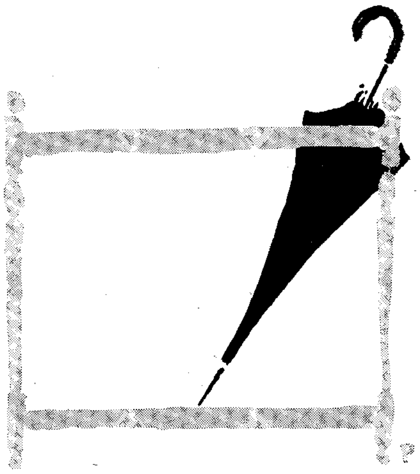
joking ballots. Her election, in fact, was the oddest fruit to date of what might be called the Italian system of non-representative representative government. Simply stated, the ultimate result of a tremendously complex system and situation is that the Italian electorate has little to do with what kind of government eventually emerges from the constantly shifting mists of Italian politics. (Since the Second World War, the country has seen forty-seven governments.) An Italian voter must vote a straight party ticket on which there is room for five choices for senatorial or parliamentary seats. A list of candidates for a party is normally many names long, and is headed by the candidates expected to garner the most votes. If one wishes to vote for a certain candidate, the other candidates one votes for must be within the same party. Increasing the distance between voter and government is the fact that the electorate selects only the parliament. The task of choosing a Prime Minister and of putting together a Cabinet begins only after the voting is over, and is performed by the deputies themselves in the coalitions of parties—led by perennial leaders like Amintore Fanfani, Ciriaco De Mita, Bettino Craxi, and Alessandro Natta—that form and collapse in the smoke-filled rooms of Palazzo Montecitorio, Palazzo Madama (the seat of the Senate), Palazzo Chigi (the seat of the Prime Minister), and the Quirinale (the home of the President).

Cicciolina's name—No. 49 on an electoral list of fifty-four, which had Radical Party leader Marco Pannella and such longstanding associates of his as Emma Bonino and Giovanni Negri at the top—appears to have been placed on the ballot by astute Radicals on the theory that she might attract voters to their tiny party (a frantic membership drive throughout 1986 had succeeded in raising the number of Italian Radicals only from three thousand to eleven thousand) without being elected herself. However, the Radicals, renowned though they are for absurdist techniques in politics, failed to gauge the extent of the nihilistic streak in the Italian voters. According to Frederic Spotts and Theodor Wieser, whose study "Italy: A Difficult Democracy" charts a path through postwar Italian politics, the voters have become cynically fatalistic about their chances of influencing the political direction of their country. Italian governments "are set up, govern and fall with little or no regard for the electorate's views," Spotts and Wieser observe. "The ballot is a blank check that the voter periodically endorses." Out of this feeling of powerlessness, the two scholars believe, has grown the Italian habit of casting protest ballots—something that an amazing eighteen per cent of the Italian population did in 1983. Voting for Cicciolina, one Italian friend told me, was certainly a better protest than casting a blank ballot or voting for Giuseppe Verdi, as people had done in the past.

THE Radical Party reacted to the election of its most unlikely parliamentary candidate with a rather scattered and muted enthusiasm. The deluge of international publicity for Cicciolina which began when she was nominated, and seemed to double with her election—she was then interviewed by television networks from countries as remote as Afghanistan—brought with it for the Radicals the danger that their standing as an idiosyncratic but serious party would be transformed into a single image: the Honorable Staller. The Radicals are hardly unaccustomed to using bizarre theatrical tactics to attract attention, or to running unlikely candidates. Tiny (garnering only 2.6 per cent of the vote in the last election), troublesome, notorious, an oddity among the political parties of Europe, the present-day Italian Radical Party grew out of a leftist branch of the old establishment Liberal Party following the shift of the latter to the right under Giovanni Malagodi in the mid-nineteen-fifties. Like the present-day Liberals and some of the other so-called Italian lay parties—the Socialists, the Liberals, the Republicans, the Social Democrats—the Radicals are secularist, liberal, and internationalist in outlook. They have their philosophical roots in the late-nineteenth-century Italian political tradition, which made conscious reference to Adam Smith and Count Cavour. In spite of their leftist stand on modern issues, their philosophy draws directly on the venerable line of European liberalism, particularly in its emphasis on individual rights and responsibilities in a civic society. While they are hardly what Americans might think of as radicals, their often supremely eccentric tactics have an impact on the political scene far beyond anything their numbers would warrant, and give them a refreshing function as a source of new ideas—a function that actually is radical in the stagnant atmosphere of the eternal standoff between Christian Democrats, Communists, and Socialists. Like Cicciolina, the Radical Party is surprisingly well known, and has a clearly defined role in Italian life; it is an unpredictable spark that occasionally ignites important causes. (The national referendums that reaffirmed the divorce and abortion laws grew directly out of Radical Party initiatives.)



The public image cultivated by the Party leader, Marco Pannella, who was a leftist student leader in the nineteen-fifties, reorganized the Radical Party in the sixties, and has determined its style and activities ever since, is one of "righteous anger," in the phrase of a young friend of mine who has been a Radical Party member for several years. It is, however, righteous anger mixed with a theatrical whimsicality, a commedia-dell'arte sense of improvisation, which seems to be unique to Continental leftist organizations. The style must appear strange to Americans, among whom guerrilla theatre has never been truly accepted as a means of conveying a message. One of the Radicals' minor stunts before the election was to use their free campaign broadcast time on one of the RAI—national television—networks to show Pannella and Emma Bonino sitting bound and gagged for one Warholesque hour: this to protest the notorious monopoly of the RAI networks by the political parties in power. Before Cicciolina, the Radicals were perhaps best known for having placed on their 1983 parliamentary

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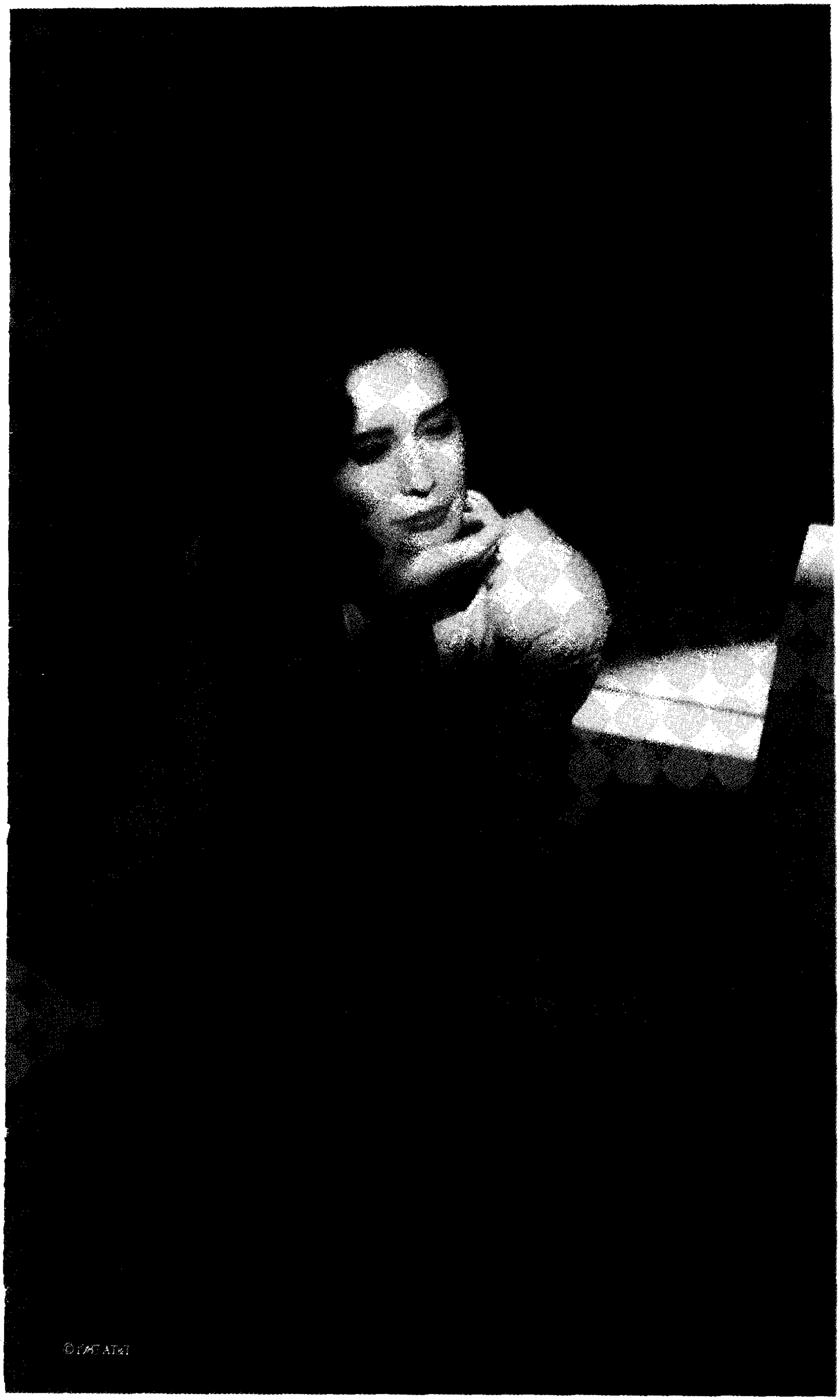

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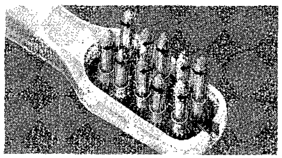

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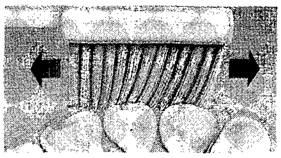

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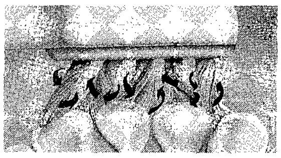

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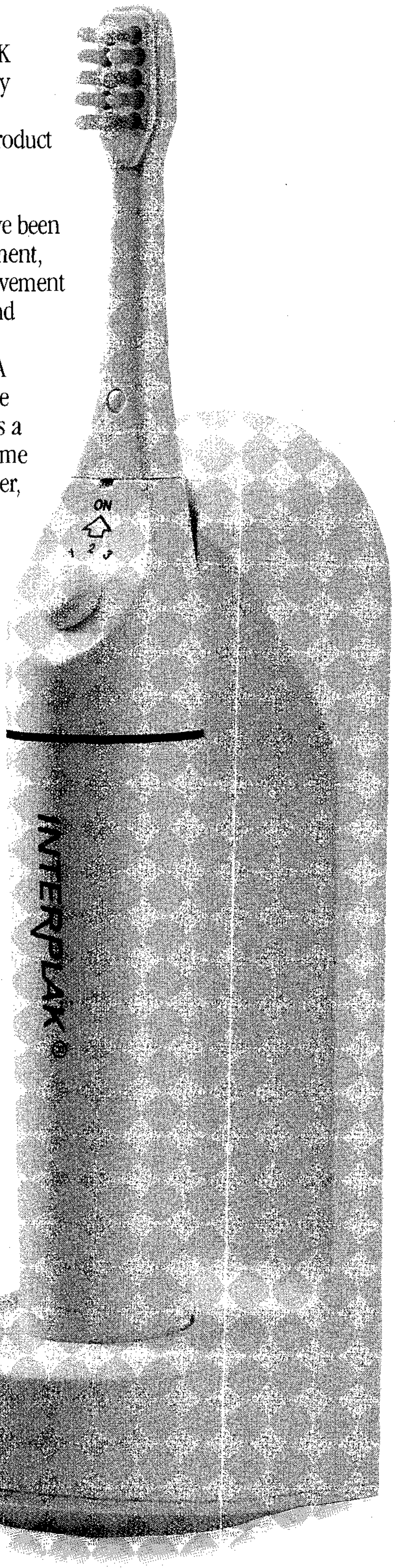

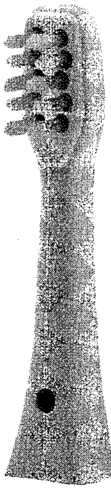

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ticket the leftist Professor Toni Negri, who had been jailed on charges of alleged links to the Red Brigades. A few years later, they attracted attention by naming to a high Party post Enzo Tortora, a television personality accused of drug dealing and Neapolitan Camorra connections. Negri availed himself of the immunity to prosecution enjoyed by all party officials and parliamentary candidates to escape immediately to Paris; Tortora resigned from his post and was arrested (he has since been acquitted) on the basis of a Camorrist's testimony.

Last summer, the Radicals made headlines again by opening the airwaves of Radio Radicale, their famous radio station, to phone-in callers from all over the country. Radio Radicale is a predictably erratic network that combines a detailed following of hard news (it is the only outlet that broadcasts parliamentary proceedings and important trials in full) with rambling discussions of meditation and vegetarianism. In this case, callers were allowed to say, uncensored, whatever they wished. The subsequent deluge of often obscene crank calls from North Italians attacking *terroni* (an insulting word for Southerners), from South Italians inveighing graphically against the abuses and presumed sexual failings of *crucchi*, or Northerners, and from Fascists, dadaists, football fans, and anarchists gave the Italian press material for dozens of editorials on the violence percolating beneath the surface of Italian society. (The program was closed down by the local Roman magistrate after one caller gave a long obscene litany in a voice exactly like the Pope's.) Like the candidacy of Cicciolina, the open broadcasts were an unabashed publicity stunt that grew to disconcerting proportions. Both were also variations on a favorite theme of the Radicals—tempting the mass of Italians to reveal their true nature. "In part, the Radicals named Cicciolina a candidate to test the pulse of the Italian voter," said Helvia Balletti, a Roman housewife in her fifties. Signora Balletti, a friend of mine, exemplifies the fact that it is impossible to generalize about Radical Party members—they are of all ages, and come from all sorts of social backgrounds. "They simply wanted to display to the world the lengths of absurdity that voters will go to when they get disgusted with these farcical elections that elect no one and don't represent anyone who is not already a politician. Why *not* vote for a porno star?"

As in the case of Toni Negri, however—after the leftist professor's escape to Paris a nonplussed Pannella could only make the obviously untrue statement that he could call Negri back whenever he wanted to—the Radicals appeared flustered by the unanticipated success of their Cicciolina prank. Pannella duly had himself photographed in the parliament, sitting grave and elder-statesmanlike to one side of his colleague's small, avid blond profile, but other Radicals were not so calm. Before the election, a group of women who held high posts in the Party—many of them pioneers of Italian feminism—called a press conference to protest what they called the manipulation of Ilona Staller by the media. The conference quickly became a photo opportunity for Cicciolina—she was there, cheerfully protesting to her colleagues that she was *not* being manipulated—and was thoughtfully headlined in the next day's papers: "RADICAL WOMEN JEALOUS OF CICCIOLINA." When, after the election, I telephoned Emma Bonino, who had been present at the news conference, she told me she didn't mind having Ilona Staller as a Radical deputy. "In many ways, it's a good thing," she said. "It has rooted out the lingering remnants of *perbenismo* among my colleagues, who thought they were so liberal." *Perbenismo* is a noun from the adjective phrase *perbene*, which means "respectable," with overtones of bourgeois morality; it was an expression I heard often in discussions of Cicciolina. "But I got to see an excerpt on television of one of her sex performances," Bonino went on. "The really shocking thing was the expressions on the faces of the young men in the audience. It surprised even me. Those faces . . ."

ON the morning I visited Cicciolina, she was wearing a strapless bright-pink evening gown, pink high heels, and a slightly grubby pair of white lace gloves. She carried off this extraordinary outfit with the look of ingenuousness that is her trademark, as if she were a little girl trying to dress up to define the word "tawdry." She had washed her hair, which she kept fluffing out with her fingers to dry, and she was made up for the television camera; in a short while, a Japanese TV crew was to finish filming a Cicciolina special for a program whose Japanese title seemed to translate as "Interesting, Nice People You'd Like to Know."

"Yesterday, they filmed me running in the fields, playing the violin, and bathing in a tub of milk," she told me as we sat down in a small side room near the entrance to her office. The office is the headquarters of Diva Futura, the small pornographic video agency headed by Cicciolina and Riccardo Schicchi; it is on an upper floor of one of the luxurious suburban apartment buildings along the Via Cassia, where many upper-middle-class Romans live. Like Cicciolina's private apartment on the floor above, it looks out north toward Florence over the hayfields and rolling green hills of the Lazio region. The entranceway to the office holds a huge, rather menacing wooden Pinocchio and a few stuffed animals—outriders of an army of toys that Cicciolina has in her apartment and carries around with her to publicity appearances and to the parliament. The office walls hold neatly framed covers of magazines, Italian and foreign, with names like *Stud* and *Playmen;* on the covers are photographs of Cicciolina and young women from her agency semi-dressed and undressed. Several of them—their professional names are Ramba, Moana, and Baby—were among the young women who advanced bare-breasted on Palazzo Montecitorio.

Talking to Ilona Staller seemed at once useless and uncannily conclusive: useless because, whether she used the

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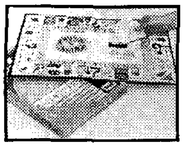

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fluttery schoolgirl voice or the intelligent and articulate one, her words made up a line of public-relations patter as impenetrable as that of any established celebrity; conclusive because it was abundantly clear that the important thing about her is not words or ideas but the peculiar sensual fascination she gives off as casually as breath, which makes the work she does as inevitable as that of a born dancer or musician. In spite of this, I was not surprised to find that, more than any other performer I had ever talked to, she had about her a sense of unshakable isolation.

"I have many, many fans but no friends," she told me, settling into a chair and pouring herself a morning aperitivo from a bottle taken from a mirrored closet nearby. "No friends, and no serious lovers. I live alone, and I have no time for any private life. I've been married once, for my passport out of Hungary, and I have no interest in being married again, though it might be nice one day to have a baby. For now, there is only Ricco—Riccardo Schicchi, my manager. All the newspapers say, 'Ah! He's the one who ruined Cicciolina!' But for years he has been at once manager, father, and a great friend to me. He's not a lover—just the only person I confide in."

Schicchi is a photographer, usually described in the Italian press as a sort of Svengali. On the morning I visited the offices of Diva Futura, he poked his head in on his way to an appointment—a dark-haired young Roman, unexceptional except for a cautious, sidelong way of moving and an odd flat look in his eyes. In the early nineteen-seventies, after their association began, with a chance encounter in front of Staller's apartment building, Schicchi encouraged the young woman to shift the direction of her efforts toward hard-core pornography. (She had done some nude modelling and had had a few scantily clad bit parts in low-budget films.) Together, in 1976, they created the erotic late-night program "Radio Luna," where the breathy, childish voice of the newly created character Cicciolina made its initial appearance. The first of its kind in Italy (state control of the airwaves had just been lifted), the program was a *succès de scandale*, and soon Ilona Staller, as Cicciolina, was posing for magazines and starring in pornographic films and stage shows. Inspired by Schicchi, she had already been giving anarchic public displays in the name of sexual freedom—sponta-

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neously raising her skirt or baring her breasts on crowded Roman streets and in piazzas, and revelling in the tumult of outrage and delight she provoked.

"I love the stir I can create with my body," she said now, resting her aperitivo glass reflectively against her chin. "For me, it is ecstasy when they react, when they reach out to touch Cicciolina. I adore it, I'd like to have all of them touch me. The *personaggio* Cicciolina is not really an act at all—she is an expression of the child within me, the child without shame. Perhaps it comes from the family atmosphere I grew up in—one of great openness and affection. I was always an uninhibited little girl, who walked naked from room to room; always cuddled, pampered. At thirteen, I first posed nude for photographs, and my parents were not shocked at all."

She told me that her mother was an obstetrician and her father a minor official in the Hungarian bureaucracy. She grew up in Budapest and completed her studies as far as high school, specializing first in medicine, then in archeology. After that, in the early seventies—she is unclear about the year and her age at the time—she paid a certain sum in Hungarian currency to have a marriage arranged to an Italian businessman visiting Hungary. The purpose of the marriage was specifically to allow her to emigrate to the West. ("I always knew I had to see other countries," she told me.) Soon after her arrival in Italy, she left her husband and began the career of modelling and small movie parts that continued until she met Schicchi. Her parents, who had separated, were unaware until quite recently of the type of career their daughter was pursuing, but then her fame began to spread beyond the borders of Italy. According to Cicciolina, who has returned to Budapest several times for visits, her mother reacted loyally, without shock, to the news of her daughter's transformation into an Italian pornographic star, and was "tremendously proud" to hear of her election as deputy.

"I am an artist who chose to be a porno star," Cicciolina went on, cocking her ear to telephones ringing with call after call in the next room. "Pornography was my choice when I discovered it. I wanted to find out about a world that before, perhaps, hadn't particularly attracted my attention. I liked it, because it was eroticism, strong eroticism. I had been reading in the newspapers about all the violence in the world—people shooting each

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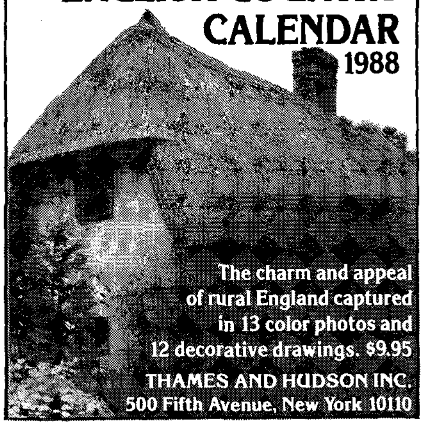

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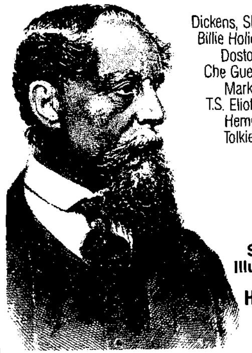

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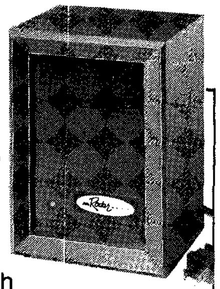
other, cutting off arms, legs, heads—and I thought, Why instead can't we see in public the most beautiful thing that exists in the world: the act of love? As a deputy, I would like to specialize in sexuality. No one speaks out about sex in Italy, and I think sexual repression brings violence. Therefore, let's revel, let's live, let's enjoy our sexuality like birds in a tree, like Cicciolina, making love à la Kama Sutra!"

I asked her what Italian women thought of her, and she grimaced slightly. "For the most part, they don't accept me. They say I commercialize their bodies. But they don't seem to realize that everything is relative in life. If you're talking about commercialization, women's bodies are commercialized everywhere. Even in *Panorama* and *L'Espresso*"—two major Italian weeklies—"you find half-naked bodies." She paused, fingering her damp blond hair and staring out the window, and then continued, in a brisk, instructive, let's-clear-the-air kind of voice, a bit along the lines of Dr. Ruth Westheimer. "There are women in Italy who make love in a liberal fashion. But there are too many who turn out the lights and make love always in the same position. It is obvious that the man will seek out other, more uninhibited experiences. It's the fault of society, of the church, the priests, of those who continue to say, 'Make love for procreation,' as Pope Wojtyla says. For procreation, and only after that for pleasure! And I say back to Pope Wojtyla, 'Make love for pleasure.' "

Her secretary, a pleasant-faced, conservatively dressed young woman, knocked on the door and came in to give me some information: Cicciolina's next stage show would be the following Friday, at a rural night club outside Modena.

"I intend to keep on doing shows," Ilona Staller went on. "Why shouldn't I? No other professional would be asked to give up his work when he became a deputy. We deputies earn ten million lire"—about seven thousand eight hundred dollars—"a month. Of mine, the Radical Party takes seven, and that leaves me just three million. So I've got to earn more, somewhere. Shows, television—even this Japanese program is paying. I have to work, or else the whole structure I have set up will fall into bankruptcy."

As she got up to go to her appointment with the Japanese, I asked how



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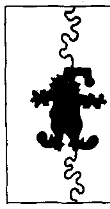

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she envisioned the future, and whether, like many other female performers, she was concerned about getting older.

"In ten years, fifteen years, I will certainly have a place in history." She said this with a completely serious face, with no hint of irony, crossing her white arms against her bright-pink evening gown, and staring out of the window at the farmland in the distance. "And not only Italian history. European history and world history. I'd like to have it said of me that I helped shape the worlds of politics and show business." Her straight, dark brows drew together, and she was silent for a minute as she motioned me before her out of the room. "And besides," she added quickly, shutting the door behind her, "when I'm old, let's say the age of a grandmother, and no one wants to see me perform—well, then I can always go back to the radio."

Throughout her conversation with me, she had spoken in her normal, rather charming low-pitched voice, lapsing only a few times, usually for emphasis, into the prattling tones of the character Cicciolina. In the parliament, she tends mainly to use the Cicciolina voice. In the past, she referred to her fans as *cicciolini;* now she has transferred the term to her colleagues in the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, referring to Spadolini and Pertini as Cicciolino Spadolini and Cicciolino Pertini. (She sometimes closes television interviews by imploring Cicciolino Reagan and Cicciolino Gorbachev to think about making love instead of building bombs.) It is a curious thing to see the patient courtesy with which the other deputies, by and large, have received her. (Giulio Andreotti remarked in an interview that she was welcome in the parliament "*pur che si copra*"—as long as she covers herself.) The only widespread objection to her parliamentary manner so far has been that she has a tendency to read long rambling speeches on Radical Party objectives, mingling her comments with observations on love and the Kama Sutra.

A LITTLE later, I watched the crew of Nippon Television hover around Cicciolina, who was to be filmed talking into a white telephone at a desk. "We will be telling the audience about your many new fans since the election," said the translator, a matronly Japanese woman in a silk dress. "So talk joyously on the phone, then pretend to write a letter and seal it with a big kiss."

"Aren't the Japanese adorable?" Cicciolina said. "Listen to the way they pronounce Italian." The dippy adolescent tone of the program, which seemed reminiscent of "A Day in the Life of Your Favorite Star" specials of the early nineteen-sixties, seemed to suit her very well. During a pause, the office door opened, and, to a visible faltering of everybody's concentration, in walked Moana, one of the actresses in the Diva Futura video company. A spectacular, rather stately Genoese blonde, Moana (sometimes headlined as La Donna Più Bella del Mondo) is renowned throughout Italy as a pinup and pornography star, and it was she who was at the prow, so to speak, of the bare-breasted contingent that escorted Cicciolina to the opening of the parliament. For the sake of publicity, Moana had come to join the filming. "More lipstick, Moana—very important with this kind of lighting," Cicciolina said, in a brisk, professional tone of voice; one could envision her thus expertly arranging camera angles in her films. "Look, put yourself here by the desk, so your legs show, and turn your breasts to the window, shoulders back." She looked at me and smiled proudly, as if she were displaying the accomplishments of a toddler. "Moana is extremely ample, isn't she?" she said.

After that, the Japanese crew filmed Ilona Staller reclining on the green lawn of the condominium's garden and fluttering a sequinned fan shaped like a butterfly; then they filmed her swimming languidly in the condominium's swimming pool while the fresh-faced Japanese announcer stood by and spoke about "the friendly new member of the parliament." Cicciolina's neighbors, residents of the building, came outside or stood on their balconies to watch. With her silvery hair, bright makeup, and extreme pallor, she looked oddly unreal against the sunlit green lawns, blue water, and reddish walls of the apartment complex. Moana was out there, too, attracting awed glances as she stood majestically in her short skirt and very small top.

"I don't think that the people who elected her were casting votes of protest," Moana said to me as we watched Cicciolina swim. Moana was resonant with the accent of Genoa, and extremely formal. "The people who elected Cicciolina, in my opinion, thought she might be a new voice, might serve for something. Certainly

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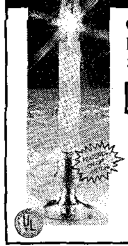

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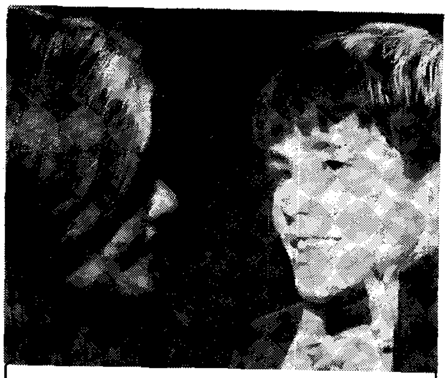
in the parliament they're not going to give her much space to do anything. With regard to sex, Italy has an old-style cast of mind. It will always be a battle. As far as I'm concerned, the more attention this election attracts, the better."

What was most striking about the scene, I decided, was the respectful attention that the neighbors—well-dressed middle-class, *perbene* Italians and their children—paid to the new deputy and to the other pornography star from the Diva Futura agency. Everyone greeted them, addressing them graciously with the formal "you;" there seemed to be none of the tendency to keep children away that might have manifested itself in the United States. A suntanned girl of about thirteen and her little brother stood by, watching with attentive faces as Cicciolina paddled inexpertly but seductively up and down the length of the pool. It came to me as I stood there that, as bizarrely out of place as Cicciolina looked in that setting, she was accepted by these normal people as a part of everyday life, within her own sphere, just as her posters, with their peculiar blend of salaciousness and kitsch, had been accepted all over Italy as part of the landscape.

It was clearer to me than ever before how important in Italian life—a life lived in close-knit groups, ranging from family to neighborhood to town—are clearly defined roles, almost Oriental in their formality and fixity, that allow people to maintain a certain crucial detachment while spending all or most of their time close together. It is this tradition, rather than any innate Puritanism, that makes up the "old-style cast of mind" that Moana mentioned, out of which grew the chief objection to Cicciolina in the parliament. The controversy itself—the sparks generated by the untoward intrusion of a woman who symbolizes one extreme of public behavior into an institution that stands for the other extreme—seems typical of this country. With the usual Italian pragmatism, everyone has ended by accepting the situation and working around it: for example, a meeting between West German NATO officials and the Italian Parliamentary Defense Committee that threatened to be disrupted by the Honorable Staller's discourses on love and the Kama Sutra was simply started over again at an undisclosed site. By the end of the summer, the Radicals had found other issues, and other ways to leap into the public eye. Marco



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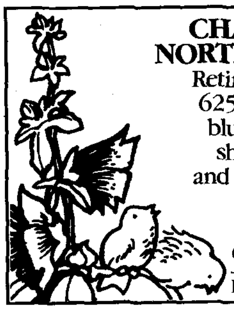

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Pannella began a dramatic campaign to legalize the sale of heroin, and this has continued to fuel editorials and parliamentary discussions; five Radicals were recently deported from the Soviet Union for demonstrating in Red Square, with Russian-language pamphlets, against the Soviet presence in Afghanistan. Cicciolina in government has already become a byword, a kind of useful standing joke—the kind that Italians have always made about the government itself. In protesting the disorganized behavior of the Minister of the Interior in coping with the disastrous mudslides in the Alpine province of Valtellina, a local mayor remarked, "Even Cicciolina could have done it better."

As Italians began their annual return from *villeggiature* in the mountains or at the beach, where they had amused themselves all August long with magazines and scandal sheets featuring nude layouts of the neophyte deputy from Pomezia, the issue of the Honorable Staller seemed passé, an amusing but quite familiar intensification of what everybody already knew about politics and life in this country. (A brief new flurry of scandal over Cicciolina's visit to Jerusalem in October—where she was driven away from the western wall by Orthodox Jews shouting "abomination" and throwing chairs—received only lackadaisical coverage in the Italian press.) It seems logical that Federico Fellini—as he demonstrated in the *Stampa* interview—has been fascinated by the image of Cicciolina in the parliament. Like much of his recent work, the situation has about it a turbulent atmosphere of fantasy—fantasy, however, that ultimately displays a firm foundation in Italian everyday life. "As a man of the theatre," Fellini told the *Stampa* reporter, "I was struck by the bringing together of eighteenth-century Father of the Nation-style figures like Pertini and Spadolini with this mysterious comic insult [*sberleffo*] that is Cicciolina. It's a dream situation, like an X-ray of something unresolved. . . . It has completely outdone me. Now I shall have to start making films that are austere, dry, and rigorous, in the style of Bresson."

—ANDREA LEE

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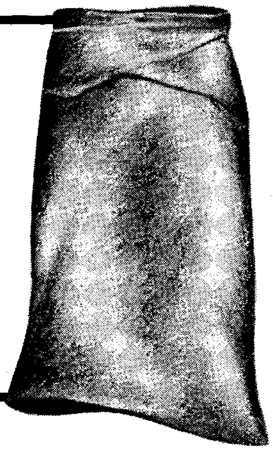

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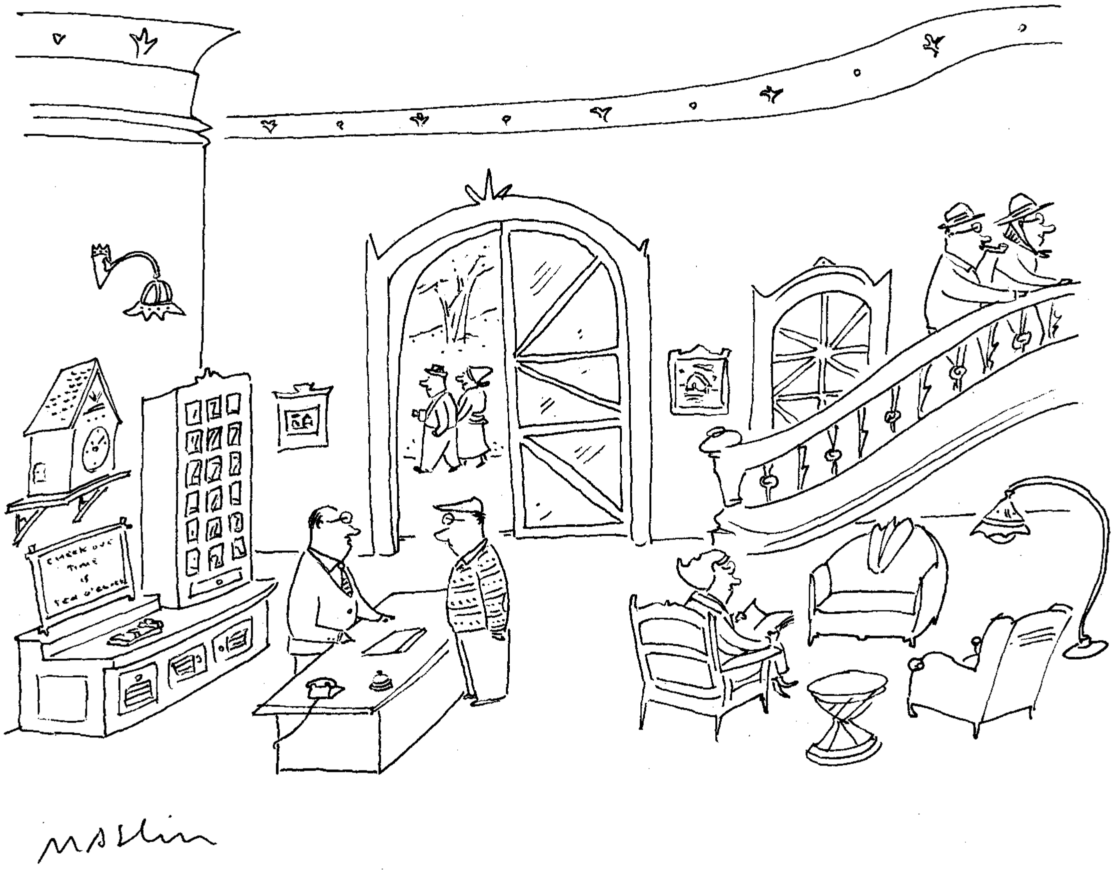
"La Buona Figliuola" was first performed in Rome (with an all-male cast, as Roman theatrical practice required), in 1760. Six years later, it reached London, at the King's Theatre in Italian (with some of the original Roman cast) and at Covent Garden in an English translation by Edward Toms, as "The Accomplish'd Maid." Toms changed the heroine's name from Cecchina to Fanny and shifted the scene to an English country house. In a preface to the published libretto he explains that he has translated the numbers into verse without "infringement on the musical accent" but has rendered the rest in spoken prose, trusting that the piece "will not be less acceptable to an English audience, by the dialogue's being without the incumbrance of recitative." The Vineyard used this eighteenth-century translation, which is an excellent piece of work. The performance confirmed what a 1766 critic wrote in the *Gazetteer:*

> The translator has had a very arduous task, to adapt the airs to the original music of the truly famous Piccinni, and it must be owned that he has succeeded beyond expectation. If ever music was used as an auxiliary to sense, and sound made to correspond with it, that happy union may be found in this piece. . . . The airs are elegant, and have not the least lameness; the soft, the pathetic, the grand, the jovial, the lofty, and the warlike, being all here elegantly expressed. . . . In a word, who ever would understand what they hear, and listen to all the beauties of an Italian opera, adorned with English sense, will prefer the *Accomplished Maid* to La Buona Figliuola.

The Vineyard made a few tactful changes but was unafraid of eighteenth-century vocabulary (" 'Tis but a momentary storm, raised by an exceptious and a hasty lover's breath"), colloquial syntax ("Was you ever in love?" "I never tells tales"), or rhymes no longer precise in modern pronunciation. I don't think I'd before heard someone actually say "Pshaw!" out loud.

Eighteenth-century Covent Garden was an intimate theatre, as much a playhouse as an opera house. The first Fanny, Mrs. Mattocks, was a celebrated Juliet, Portia, Ophelia. Mr. Mattocks, the first Lord Bellmour, the romantic tenor lead, had a small voice, it seems, but a clear one. Charlotte Brent, Mrs. Pinto, who played the formidable Lady Lucy, was, however, England's leading operatic soprano—the Mandane of Arne's florid opera seria "Artaxerxes"—and Toms built up her role with extra arias. The Vineyard is



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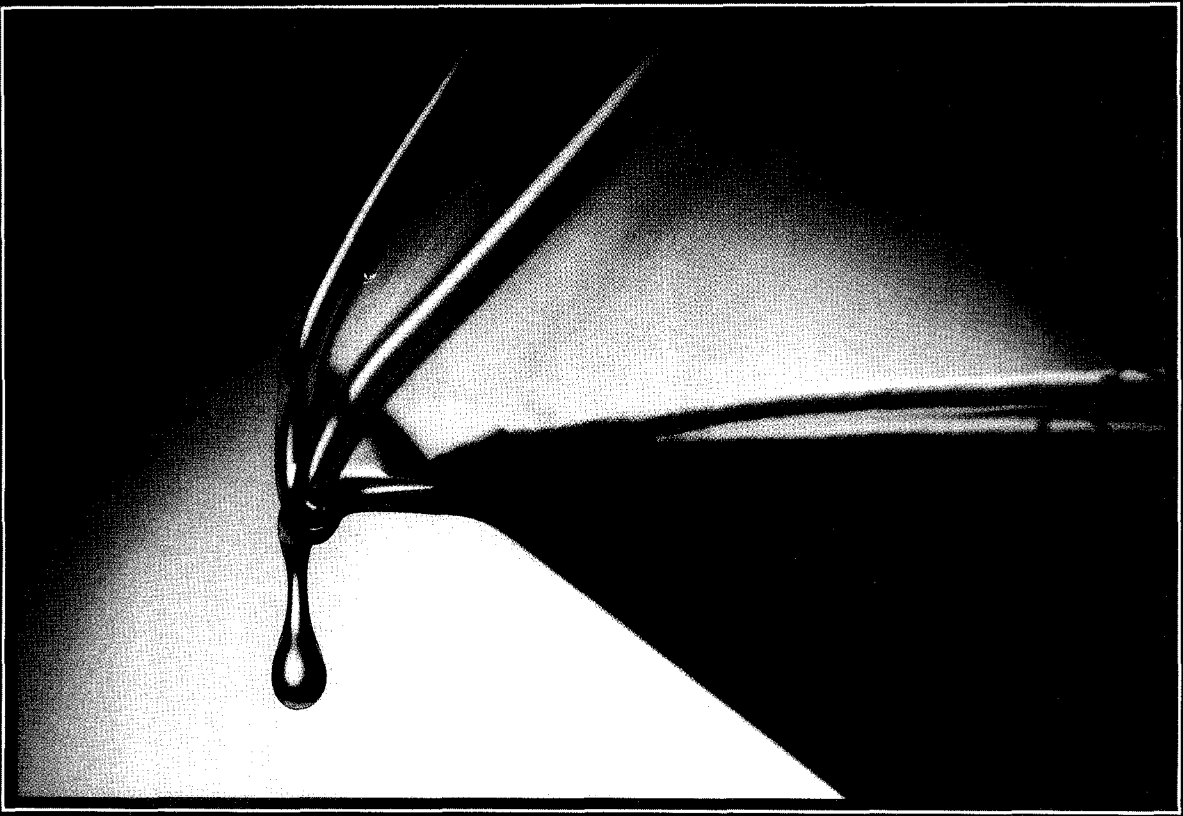

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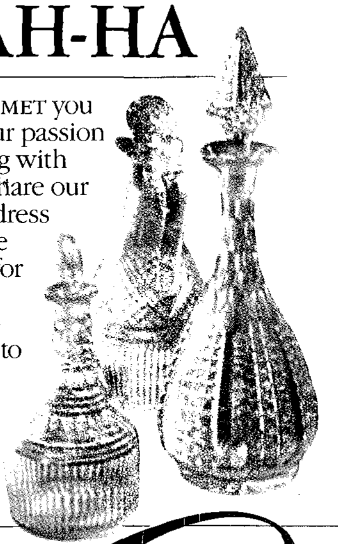

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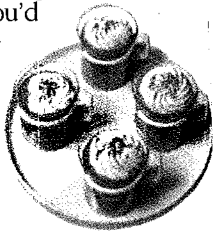

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even more intimate theatre than old vent Garden; it seats sixty-five. In past, I've complained about singers o bellow there. The "Accomplish'd aid" cast didn't bellow but seemed uctant to take full advantage of the opportunity for light, exact, pretty vocalism in which expressive utterance of the words is all-important. (Jo Sullivan and Joan Morris are singers one would like to hear in Piccinni's opera.) James Hay, the Bellmour, has a firm young tenor, but he could with profit have pondered the account of his predecessor in the role, Mr. Mattocks, given in Hugh Kelly's "Thespis." Kelly—an Irish staymaker turned playwright, poet, and journalist—published "Thespis; or, A Critical Examination into the Merits of All the Principal Performers belonging to Drury Lane Theatre" in 1766, and a sequel, examining Covent Garden performers, the following year. He calls Mr. Mattocks one

Whose tender strain, so delicately clear,
Steals, ever honied, on the heaviest ear;
With sweet-toned softness exquisitely
 warms,
Fires without force, and without vigour
 charms.

James Hay was eloquent whene'er he spoke, but when he sang dramatic tensions broke. His understated *speaking* charmed the ear, but words when vocalized were far from clear: he sacrificed inflections to mere tone. We eard a *singer*—character was gone! The Fanny, Cynthia Reynolds, felt er part and played it charmingly, to ouch the heart. She acted well; but anny's not complete unless her singng's limpid, true, and sweet. Kelly as good lines about Charlotte Brent, matchless Pinto," whose voice

elts the whole breast divinely while it
 storms,
ains with delight, and wounds us as it
 charms.

elanie Kimball, the Vineyard's Lady ucy, stormed with spirit but lacked harm of timbre. Susan and Finet, airymaid and governess in the houseold, Fanny's foes, grew coarse when hey shrilled out together. Richard olmes sang Robin, Fanny's rustic dmirer, with some accomplishment. Wilbur Watkin Lewis was best of ll, in the buffo role of Kreigsman, a ibulous German officer come in earch of the lost heiress. He used a big dynamic range and made it tell; his lines were clear; his voice was focussed well.

In 1766, the *Gazetteer* critic tells us, "in some places, where the airs were only continuations of the passions of those who were to sing them, symphonies (which too often unnaturally retard the flow of passion) were omitted, and the air commenced immediately, without any unnecessary prelude." The Vineyard adopted another approach, lapping spoken dialogue over instrumental introductions, so that characters could break straight from speech into song. Mozart used the device in "The Magic Flute" (when the introduction to Papageno's first song strikes up, "Tamino speaks through the ritornello"), and Britten used it in his version of "The Beggar's Opera." It worked admirably. A passage of recitativo accompagnato became effective melodrama, prefiguring "Fidelio," as spoken phrases were punctuated by instrumental comment or underpinned by chords.

Joseph LoSchiavo's stage direction was straightforward. Allen Moyer's set was simple, serviceable, and quite attractive. Stephen Francis Vasta conducted the small band: Piccinni's score had been arranged for string quartet, wind quartet, trumpet, and harpsichord. The Vineyard is an L-shaped theatre, with its stage where the arms meet; the band was stationed down one side of the longer arm. It's a tricky space to use; perhaps more could be done to insure that key instrumentalists can see the stage, as in the eighteenth century they did, to catch cues directly from the singers, breathe the music with their breaths.

ROSSINI composed "Il Viaggio a Reims," an opera to celebrate Charles X's coronation, in 1825, for ten of the best singers in Paris—among them his future Mathilde (in "Tell") and Moïse, and Bellini's future Norma and Pollione—along with eight good singers in smaller roles. It was his last opera in Italian. He poured out prodigies of high-spirited vocal invention, calling for rapidity, accuracy, and charm of voice—brilliance in swift music, eloquence in slow melodies, wit in the utterance of words, and precision in ensembles. (A Gran Pezzo Concertato begins with an unaccompanied andante for thirteen solo voices, each playing an active part, and concludes with a stretta for fourteen.) Fresh, fleet young voices can, after ample rehearsal, compass a successful modern performance; the Opera Theatre of St. Louis proved that last year. The New York première of "Il Viaggio," given in Town Hall last month, unstaged, by Concert

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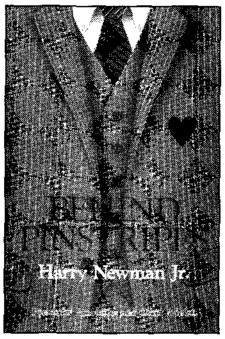

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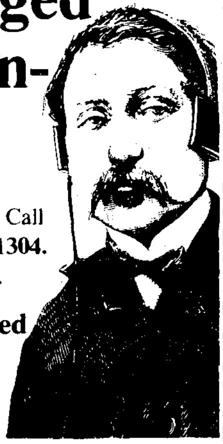

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Opera of Manhattan, was a less polished affair. Good marks for enterprise, for energy, for appreciation of Rossini's vivacity. Lower marks in respect of agility, purity, sweetness, gentleness, lightness, and steadiness of unforced tone—except to the two principal tenors, Glenn Siebert and Abram Morales. Mr. Siebert, as Count Libenskof, a volatile Russian, sang nimbly and courteously, with suppleness and subtlety. Mr. Morales, as the Chevalier Belfiore, a young French officer confident of his attractions, deployed a small, swift bright-trumpet voice with accuracy, clarity, and wit. Much of the rest was too loud. Rossini's orchestra calls for four horns, two trumpets, and three trombones. The brass phalanx was stationed stage left, and whenever it fired into the hall—which was often—ears flinched. Timothy J. Lindberg, conducting, aimed at liveliness, and he achieved it, but at the expense of delicacy and grace.

The score is captivating. The evening was in its way a success. The best moments were the pianissimo stretches of the tenor-soprano and the tenor-contralto duets. It ended well, too, as the prima donna of the plot hymned the virtues of Charles X. She is Corinna, the heroine of Mme. de Staël's once famous novel "Corinne," who improvises her effusions to harp accompaniment. (The Town Hall harpist lost her way at one point; presumably she was playing from a modern instrumental part unprovided with the concomitant text-and-melody line that in nineteenth-century orchestral parts kept instrumentalists in touch with singers they accompanied.) Corinna in 1825 was Giuditta Pasta; in Town Hall she was Kati Guerra, who sang the strophes with an ardor and conviction that made them, for the first time in my encounters with "Il Viaggio," seem a worthy crown to the long string of stirring solos and duets which brings the opera to its close. In all modern performances of the piece, some of Corinna's strophes have been omitted; for the first time I regretted it. —ANDREW PORTER

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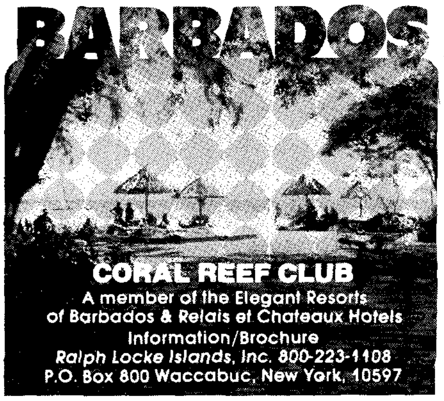

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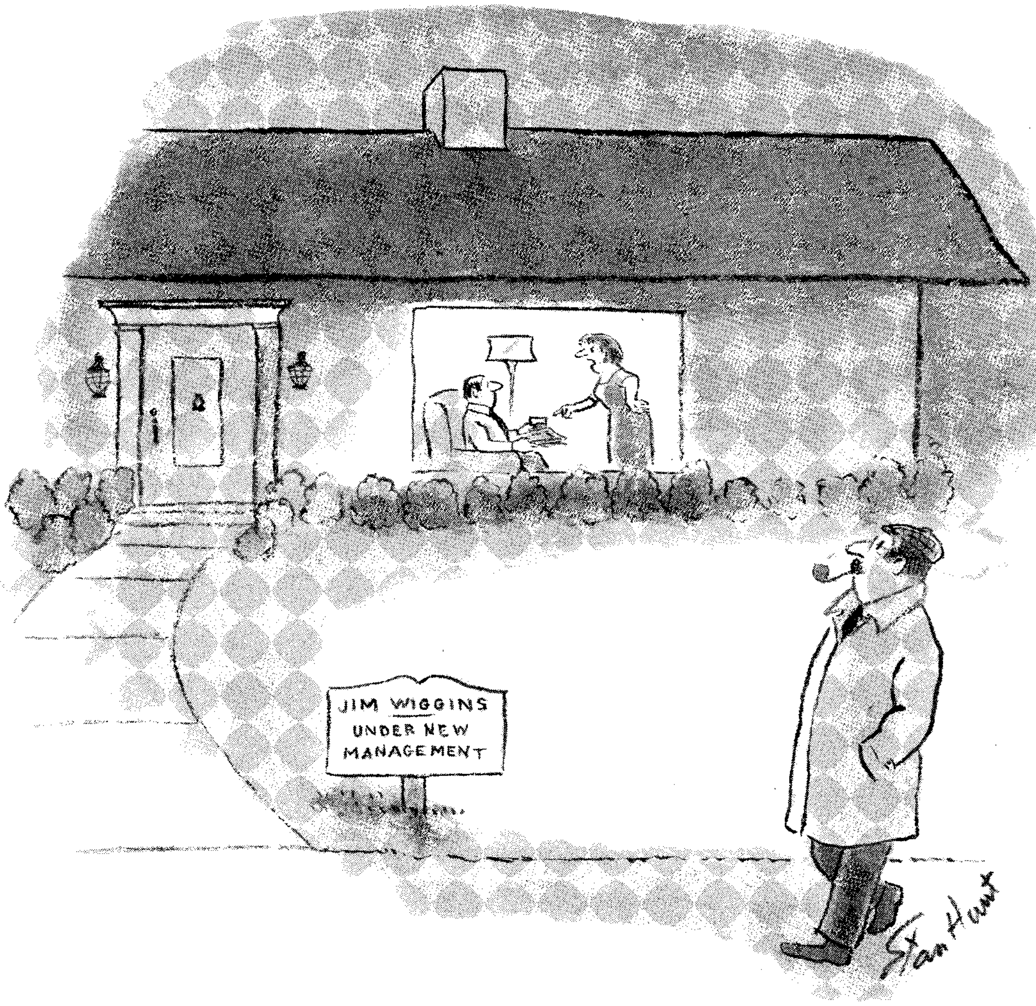
MERRILL D. PETERSON's "The Great Triumvirate: Webster, Clay, and Calhoun" (Oxford; $27.95) is a triple biography of Daniel Webster (1782-1852), Henry Clay (1770-1852), and John C. Calhoun (1782-1850). It is also, as the author says, "a history of public policy and political leadership in the United States" between 1812 and 1852: the three rivals almost define American statesmanship in that era. They operated within a situation that, by our standards, was chaotic. During the second quarter of the nineteenth century, the American party system, which had fallen apart after the War of 1812, was trying to put itself together again. The Whigs and the Democrats, the two national parties hat had emerged by the Presidential lection of 1836, were friable coalitions surrounded by a fistful of smaller arties—Anti-Mason, Free Soil, Loofoco—that arose to express impulses nadequately represented in the larger groupings. Party instability was accompanied by bewildering indiscipline. 'he career of John 'yler, the first Vice-resident to succeed the Presidency after e death of the inmbent, would be unaginable today. He s the "Tyler too" of e Whigs' successful og cabin and cider" mpaign of 1840, hich installed William Henry Harrison, ld Tippecanoe, in the 'hite House, though ly for a month. 'yler had joined the 'higs because he dested Andrew Jackon. He also detested he Whig program, nd, as President, veoed it. In retaliation, he congressional Whigs expelled him from the Party, and all the Whigs in his Cabinet except his Secretary of State, Webster, resigned. Four years later, Tyler started his own campaign. He then threw his strength to the Democratic nominee, James K. Polk, and helped Polk defeat the Whig candidate, Clay. For that matter, Calhoun served as Vice-President in John Quincy Adams' Administration and during Jackson's first term, though these two Presidents were in perfect disagreement with each other. Calhoun was in open and active disagreement with both. Mr. Peterson's job is to delineate the consistency amid these inconsistencies. Since American political participation was very broad, he must also consider the claims of thousands of other Americans of the period—not only those who sought power or patronage but those who looked only for a respectful hearing. It is a tall order, but he copes.

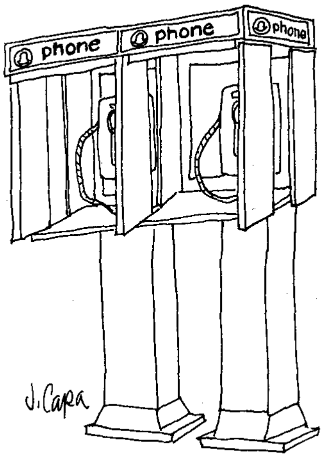
The author reminds us that his three men shared a concern common to second generations: Would they be worthy of their illustrious fathers, who had won a revolution and established a nation? And, though their personalities did not greatly resemble each other—Webster was a spendthrift, Clay a gambler, Calhoun a puritan—their lives are remarkably similar; they came from the cultural mold that gave us the works of Horatio Alger. They were all farm boys—Webster was born in New Hampshire, Clay in Virginia, and Calhoun in South Carolina—whose intelligence attracted patronage; the support that their promise elicited shows early American society in a most attractive light. All three became lawyers and flourished at the bar. (Webster appeared in a hundred and sixty-eight cases before the Supreme Court.) They all married well, and all became gentlemen farmers. Possibly because politics absorbed so much of their time, they brought up disappointing heirs, and both Clay and Calhoun almost lost their estates trying to salvage their sons' business failures. (Webster's financial embarrassment was the result of his own extravagance.) Mr. Peterson may slightly overemphasize the three men's irreligiousness—they had no quarrel with a Protestant



society and Clay was converted and baptized an Episcopalian at the age of seventy—but it is certainly true that they were men of this world, focussed on their visions of the American future. The earnestness of their political convictions gave depth to their personalities and persuasiveness to their leadership, and their debates shaped opinion in the decades when the United States, having survived two wars with Great Britain, was settling down to decide what it would become—the period when our Western frontier moved from the Appalachians to the Pacific. Yet all three failed to achieve the office on which each had set his heart: the Presidency.

The men met in Congress during the War of 1812. Clay and Calhoun were War Hawks, and Webster was a New England Federalist, opposed to the war. When peace came, all three for a time agreed on measures to develop this country by building, with federal assistance, a national infrastructure of roads and canals. They supported the Bank of the United States and protective tariffs for our "infant manufactures." Webster emphasized that tariffs also protected American labor—an up-to-date-sounding argument. Their careers spanned several periods of economic history. Twenty-three years of world war (1792-1815) had stimulated British industry and, to a lesser extent, our own, and peace presented the British with the problem of industrial overcapacity, which they tried to solve by dumping their manufactured goods on American markets. In the eighteen-twenties, American manufacturers did need protection, but they were a minority interest; Mr. Peterson tells us that Webster, who moved from Portsmouth to Boston in 1816, was converted to protectionism only in 1827, after Massachusetts merchants began to invest in factories. By 1846, when the British repealed the Corn Laws on the way to free trade, the tariff had become one of the most divisive issues in American politics, and Calhoun, speaking for Southern planters against Northern capitalists, fought protection. Mr. Peterson points out that advanced economic theory of the day advocated free trade, but that John Stuart Mill (like Gunnar Myrdal our time) conceded that a young cou try might need protective tariffs. T author's account of early-nineteent century discussions about developi our underdeveloped country reads ve much like twentieth-century discussions about the Third World.

But economics always turns into something else, and in our history at that time economic issues became constitutional ones. Calhoun retreated from his early nationalism to maintain that the United States was not a nation but "in reality an assemblage of nations." Webster argued that the United States was not only a union bu a unity, and evoked "the people's Constitution, the people's government made for the people, made by the people, and answerable to the people.' Clay, too, devoted his career to th Union. Mr. Peterson's close readin of local politics demonstrates ho greatly Calhoun's thought was hos tage to his slaveholding constituenc his elaboration of states' rights seem less rational than rationalizing. M Peterson presents Calhoun's argu ments fairly, although, as the autho of the entertaining and illuminatin "The Jefferson Image in the Ameri can Mind," he can't help objecting t efforts to characterize Calhoun's rad cal reaction as Jeffe sonian: ". . . in Jeffe son's creed state righ were in the service the fundamental h man rights of freedc and self-governme Calhoun converted t doctrine into a defe *sive weapon again* democracy . . ."



In the course of th volume, slavery i vades and poisons e ery issue—even, times, foreign polic because it led to coll sions with Great Britain. And slave guaranteed the failure of each man Presidential ambition. As a spokesma for slavery, Calhoun dwindled into regional figure. Webster's constituency split: Massachusetts' "Conscienc Whigs" scorned her "Cotton Whigs' for yielding to slaveholders in order to preserve the Union. Of the three, Clay probably suffered the worst political damage. He was a slaveowner but also an emancipationist, a leader in the movement to colonize Africa with freed slaves, and a passionate believer in the Union. His opinions had done

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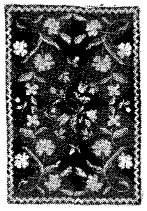

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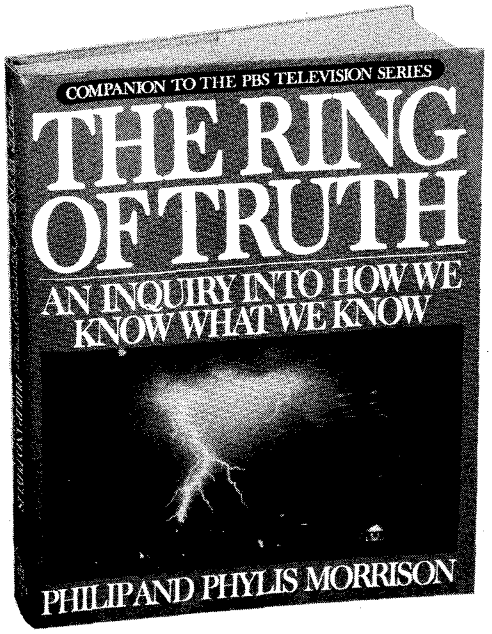
n no harm when he migrated to ntucky, at the age of twenty, for in youth most Americans agreed that very was so anomalous in a free intry, and would be so anachronistic the new century, that it was bound disappear. But it did not disappear, d as the century proceeded Clay rned the enmity of slaveholders, who posed emancipation, and of abolitionists, who opposed colonization. Clay, of course, is famous for arranging compromises that held the Union together, from the Missouri Compromise, of 1820-21, to his last act of statesmanship, the Compromise of 1850. His repeated efforts at negotiation demonstrate his inveterate optimism. Each time, the zealots were momentarily grateful to him for saving them from the worst results of their impetuosity, and each time they relapsed into distrusting him as either soft on slavery or soft on anti-slavery. Clay always retained a loyal following. Mr. Peterson quotes Lincoln's eulogy: "The spell—the long-enduring spell—with which the souls of men were bound to him is a miracle." But in the course of his career his availability came to seem a liability, as was true in our time of, say, Adlai Stevenson and Hubert Humphrey among Democrats, and Robert A. Taft among Republicans.

And then there was Andrew Jackson, who stormed through American history, as Clay said, "like a tropical tornado." His Presidency helped foreclose the other men's ambitions. Clay, Calhoun, and Webster united against Jackson's "executive usurpation" to no avail. The Jacksonian era refined—or coarsened—the arts of politics, and, in Mr. Peterson's judgment, none of the rio mastered the techniques of politi- al management that had been devel- ped by Martin Van Buren, Jackson's ecretary of State, Vice-President, nd successor. Van Buren's enemies hought of him as an intriguer, but a ecent biographer, John Niven, pre- ents him, more sympathetically, as an rganizer of the Democrats. Van Bu- en (a poor, bright country boy) grew p in New York state, where politics etained its eighteenth-century pattern f rivalry between great families— lans concerned primarily with patron- ge, not policy. Van Buren enforced arty discipline and insisted on Party nity, Niven believes, for the sake of deological reliability—he was the first o practice what we now call issue- riented politics. Boss or idealist, Van Buren changed American politics. The



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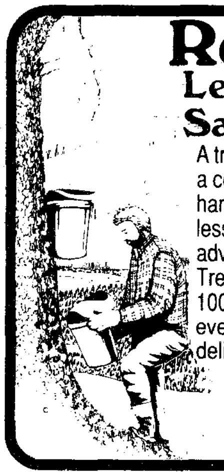

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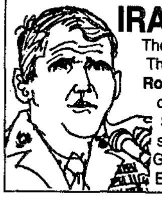

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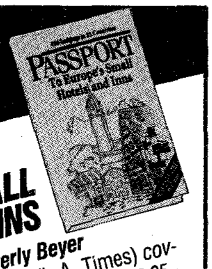

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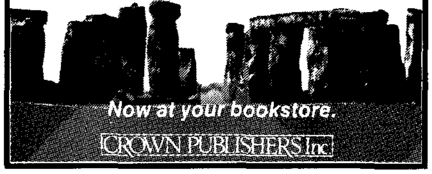

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pursuit of the Presidency became a matter of skilled organization, and presented problems that have been familiar ever since: *entering the race too* early (Webster, for the Whig nomination in 1840) or too late (Clay, for the Whig nomination in 1848), or trying to look principled while wooing groups who do not share your principles (Calhoun, courting the egalitarian Locofocos for the Democratic nomination in 1844). Even then, these problems could only be described; even now, they yield to knack, not prescription.

Of the trio, Mr. Peterson most admires Clay, although he is just to them all. He credits Calhoun, as Monroe's Secretary of War, with first-rate administrative abilities; Calhoun almost totally reorganized what was in 1817 our largest bureaucracy. But once Calhoun became the prisoner of slavery his Presidential gifts became might-have-beens; Mr. Peterson thinks that his political legacy was secession.

Webster would probably have made the least successful President. Despite his humble beginnings, he projected an unsympathetic public personality, aloof and aristocratic; he demonstrated few administrative gifts and worked sporadically. However, Webster's eloquence ennobled our patriotism, and his view of the Union became ours. Mr. Peterson's Clay had the most generous imagination; he was, for example, the first—and for some years the only—American statesman to see Latin America's revolutions as sisters of our own. And we have adopted his belief that the federal government should actively promote economic growth.

Mr. Peterson may be a little unjust —to Clay and Webster, at any rate— in regarding the Civil War as "a judgment on each of the departed statesmen." He writes, "For Clay it offered grim proof of the limits of compromise. . . . With respect to Webster, the war demonstrated the fragility of law and constitutions before moral and social forces he never truly understood." I am not sure we should use our hindsight to accuse them of lack of foresight. We would all like to imagine that we would have been abolitionists; it is just as likely that, like most Northerners, we would have seen abolitionists as members of the lunatic fringe, who had an affinity with other crackpot causes, such as woman suffrage—at least until the decade after these men died, when the aggressiveness of slaveowners began to give the abolitionists some political credibility.

Mr. Peterson is not a great styli and his inclusiveness sometimes fe crowded, yet his details enable *to recognize how little the practic* of parliamentary democracy ha changed. Year in, year out, in Co gress after Congress, the tariff com up for revision, and the processes lobbying, bargaining, and nigglir which the author faithfully describ read exactly like Congress cobbling tax law today. The issues—when does a benefit to a special interest serve the general interest?—remain identical. And Mr. Peterson's inclusiveness is valuable, too, in its attention to lesser figures, men who became footnotes after they died, but whose opinions and search for responsiveness were decisive while they lived. He presents the constant interrogation of leaders by followers that endows democratic politics with fascination and incalculableness.

—NAOMI BLIVEN

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

TOUCH, by Elmore Leonard (Arbor House; $17.95). This is the first publication of a novel written in 1977 and, Mr. Leonard tells us in an introduction, widely rejected, because its subject—the appearance of a young former Franciscan monk and stigmatic with the power to heal by touch—defied publishing category. It still defies category, but Mr. Leonard's popularity now makes the question moot. The scene, as in many of his early novels, is Detroit, and the people who surround the former monk, Juvenal (né Charlie Lawson), are a young woman promoter of rock-and-roll records, a right-wing Catholic activist, a one-time gospel showman, a TV-talk-show host, and a number of bit players of the sort Mr. Leonard handles to perfection. Juvenal, wh has an almost Christlike modest and sweetness (the rock promote thinks he's "neat"), is something o a problem, and the healings we witness are interestingly equivocal; boy cured of leukemia might simpl be in remission, for example. Th story, such as there is, rides on a irony: Can miracles happen in ou disbelieving time?

VALLEY OF DECISION, by Stanle Middleton (New Amsterdam $15.95). Purcell's "Dido and Aeneas" is never far from one's mind as one reads this melodrama abou a singer singled out, after a performance of Purcell's opera, for a starring rôle in a distant land—a role that may mean an end to domestic bliss. Of course, the parallel is imperfect; the couple in question are English and married, the distant land is America, and the husband (a cellist) is the jilted party. Stanley Middleton, a prolific English novelist making his American publishing début, rings some nice changes on standard two-party dialogue; the asides of three members of a string quartet in which the hero plays for a while are especially keen. But the prose is long-winded: "The main block of the factory was being demolished, beginning with the left corner where the outside walls had been battered into hillocks of bricks but where the first floor hung tottering, at a crazy angle, still holding its shape, but hirsute with spikes of broken laths or floorboards."

THE VERY RICH HOURS, by Jean McGarry (Johns Hopkins; $15.95). The chapters of a slim novel alternate with what the author calls "ornamental prose pieces;" according to her prologue, these are to relate to each other the way "the holy and the daily" are mingled in the Duc de Berry's famous Book of Hours. A few of the prose pieces are striking; most are too cryptic and self-conscious to enrich us much. But never mind—the novel, about a smart, introverted Catholic girl named Anne Marie Kane, engages us. The setting is Boston in the seventies, where "Miss Kane," as the narrator describes herself from an ironic distance, transfers from a small parochial college to Radcliffe, works at a mental-health center, and marries a man she doesn't know very well. She and other characters are vivid because of their shortcomings and woes; Miss Kane portrays her family as "yelling at the same small deviations like shutting the venetian blinds so the slats went the wrong way," and herself as "bad with money, untidy, secretive."

NOTE: "Time with Children," a collection of stories by Elizabeth Tallent, has been published by Knopf ($15.95). Many of the stories originally appeared in *The New Yorker*.

GENERAL

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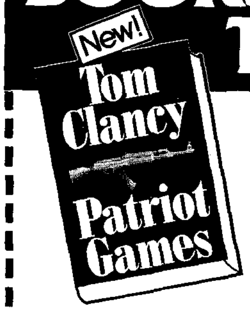

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lated from the French by Roger Nichols (Harvard; $27.50). The letters of Achille-Claude Debussy (1862-1918) have long been treasured in France for their stylistic brilliance and for what they reveal of the composer. This collection, admirably translated and annotated, can be read almost as an autobiography. It takes us through the composer and pianist's not altogether happy student years, in Rome; through the eighteen-nineties, when he composed some of his finest works; and into the twentieth century and the years of world fame. The letters, which are gracefully phrased, tonic, and often bitingly acerb, are mostly to friends and fellow-musicians, and they range widely—his likes and dislikes among composers (Gluck, Massenet, and Berlioz were especial bêtes noires), his tribulations with singers and other performers, his innovative ideas about musical composition and orchestration, and his thoughts about the world at large, particularly after the outbreak of the 1914-18 war. The last letter is from the composer's twelve-year-old daughter, Chouchou, describing to her half brother the death of their papa—a most eloquent ending. Photographs.

MARY TODD LINCOLN: A BIOGRAPHY, by Jean H. Baker (Norton; $19.95). The wife of Abraham Lincoln was intelligent, well educated, pretty, accomplished, and the daughter of distinguished families. She loved her husband and supported his political ambitions. Yet she was widely detested, and in 1875 her only surviving son, Robert, had her committed to an insane asylum. (She was released after a few months, and died in 1882.) This biographer struggles to extenuate and palliate, and pleads Mrs. Lincoln's case through repeated references to nineteenth-century injustices to women. On Ms. Baker's own showing, though, Mary Todd Lincoln was a beneficiary of nineteenth-century allowances for women; the chances are that had she been a man she would have been shot in a duel or prosecuted for fraud. She was harsh in judgment, quarrelsome, and vindictive; stingy with others and extravagant with herself. Her talent for alienating people made for a lonely old age, and, in spite of all the author's efforts, she becomes pitiable without ever having been likable. A Book-of-the-Month Cl selection.

NOTE: "History in Sherman Park: American Family and the Reaga Mondale Election," by Jonath Schell, has been published by Kno ($15.95). All the contents origina ly appeared in these pages.

MYSTERY AND CRIME

DEATH OF A DORMOUSE, by Patrick Ruell (Mysterious Press; $15.95). To Trent Adamson's oversheltered Austrian wife, the daughter of a Jewish refugee, he seems a normal, if opaque, British businessman. But soon after he is killed in a road accident she begins to perceive that neither he nor his career was what it seemed. Trudi is a most unlikely heroine—her first reaction to being stranded in widowhood is a full-scale nervous collapse—but the prospect of poverty pulls her together, and she presses forward to find out just what happened to her husband's money and, for that matter, to him. Her search takes her back to the Middle Europe her father fled, where she discovers her own, surprising provenance, and inner resources that enable her to match every crisis. Mr. Ruell is very persuasive, piling on the unlikelihoods so smoothly that even the most preposterous seem reasonable at the moment of reading.

TRICKS, by Ed McBain (Arbor House; $16.95). Halloween in the Eighty-seventh Precinct quickly degenerates into a series of grotesqueries, which include a dead body that someone is distributing piecemeal around the neighborhood, a magician whose vanishing act suddenly becomes genuine, and a homicidally inclined holdup gang that appears to be made up of smal children costumed for trick-or-treating. Along with the night' unscheduled events is an elaborat trap in which two policewomen ar bait for a serial killer of prostitutes Mr. McBain's skill at jugglin simultaneous plot lines is impec cable, as is his grasp of cop life, an all is leavened with ghoulish dead pan humor.

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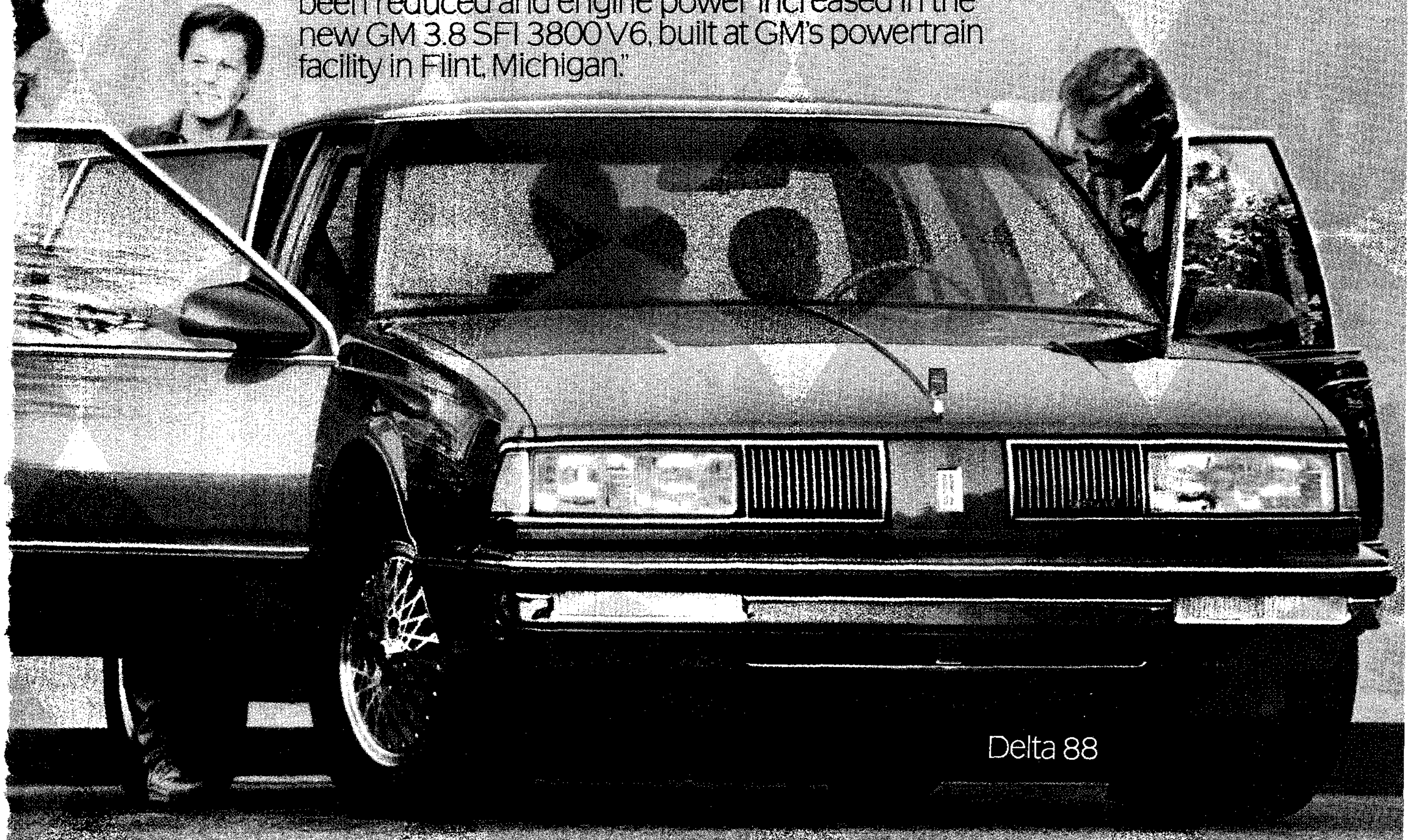

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